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RED HAND;

OR,

THE
RED
HAND

THE CHANNEL SCOURGE.

A TALE OF OLD ENGLAND.

BY A. G. PIPER.

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RED HAND; OR, THE CHANNEL SCOURGE.

CHAPTER I.

THE TWO KINGS AND THE CHAMPION.

OUR story opens at the succession of Charles I to the throne of England. That monarch had received from nature a better understanding than his father, James—a keener will, and firmer temper; and it would be unjust to deny him many of the qualities of a good, or even of a great prince. His taste in literature and the arts was perfect, his manner dignified, though not gracious, and his domestic character without blemish. *Faithlessness*, however, is represented as having been the principal cause of his misfortunes, as well as being the chief stain upon his memory. “He was,” says his historian, “impelled by an incurable propensity to dark and *crooked* ways,” which must be accepted as the truth. That his conscience, sufficiently sensitive upon occasions of ordinary moment, never seemed to reproach him with great vices, is, indeed, strange. He was perfidious, too, not only from constitution and habit, but seemingly from principle, acting upon the assumption that between him and his subjects there could be nothing of the nature of a mutual contract. He entertained

the idea, that he could not, even were he so inclined, divest himself of despotic authority. In every promise there was an implied reservation, apparently that it might be broken in case of necessity, and of that necessity, he alone was to be the judge.

Great statesmen, who were accustomed to look far before and far behind them, resolved to place the king in such a position, that he must either conduct the administration in conformity with the wishes of Parliament, or make outrageous attacks upon the most sacred principles of the Constitution. He soon found that he must govern in conformity with the wishes of the Commons, or in defiance of all law; and he was not long in making his decision. He accordingly dissolved his first Parliament, and threw the chiefs of Opposition into prison. Discontent and alarm pervaded all communities. Opposition grew loud and fierce, and the king became fully conscious of the fact that his only safety lay in a large and thoroughly ordered standing army. Still, he dared not, by his own authority, raise funds sufficient for that army; but he was a man bold in expedient and firm in resolve.

The liberties of England now were in their greatest peril. A long time had elapsed, of peace and uninterrupted industry, and men were loth to draw the sword. Many looked to the far-off American wilds as the only asylum where they could enjoy civil and spiritual freedom. To the Opposition it was also evident that an army was indispensable. The gates of the king's palace were daily besieged by a furious multitude, whose taunts and execrations were heard in the

presence chamber, and who could with difficulty be kept from invading the royal apartments. Had Charles remained in his stormy capital, 'tis probable, they would even then have found some place for making him, under an outward show of respect, a state prisoner; but he quitted London, never to return, until the day of fearful reckoning had arrived. It was to no purpose, that he now pawned his royal word, or invoked heaven to witness the sincerity of his intentions. The die was cast, and Charles I, king of England, was condemned, and a captive. His enemies could be safe only when he was helpless.

Still, a large majority of the people were attached to a hereditary monarchy, and the kingly office was regarded with veneration; but, the Opposition was irreconcilable, and the two hostile parties met, in arms against each other. The Parliamentary ranks were filled with hirelings, whom idleness had induced to enlist, while the royal army was composed of nobles and high-spirited Royalists, who had been accustomed to the use of fire-arms, the sword, and bold riding. These determined men formed, at once, the nucleus of a grand army, composed of the choicest material in the kingdom. They were victorious in every battle. But the king, with all the advantages thus gained, suffered the auspicious moment of reconciliation to pass away, and it never returned. The Royalists were disheartened, and the spirits of the Parliamentary party revived.

At this juncture the Independent party raised its head; its soul was Oliver Cromwell. No sooner did he become chief than he saw where the strength of

the Royalists lay, and by what means they could be overpowered. While Fairfax suppressed risings in the neighborhood of the capital, Cromwell routed the Welsh insurgents, and, leaving their castles in ruins, marched against the Scots. His troops were few when compared with those of the invaders, but he was not in the habit of counting his foes. The Scottish army was destroyed, and a government hostile to the king, was formed at Edinburgh.

Then Cromwell, more than ever the darling of the soldiers, returned in triumph to London, and the austere warriors who now ruled the nation meditated a fearful vengeance on the captive king. Cromwell protested that he had no control in the matter, that he could not advise Parliament to strike the blow, but submitted his own feelings to the force of circumstances, which seemed to indicate the purposes of Providence. It has been customary to impute these professions to hypocrisy; but those who pronounce Cromwell to have been a hypocrite, could not call him a fool. He was far too wise not to know that when he consented to shed the blood of England's king, the deed was *inexpiable*, and would move with grief and horror, not only every Royalist, but nine-tenths of the Parliament; and he could but see that plain Charles I was a far less formidable competitor than Charles II must become. Charles I was a hopeless captive; Charles II was free. Charles I was an object of suspicion to those who thought of executing him; Charles II would excite all the interest which belongs to distressed youth and innocence.

A mutiny broke out, which required all the power

and vigor of Cromwell to quell. Charles I was left to his fate, and his head severed from his shoulders in the presence of a thousand spectators, before the banqueting hall of his own palace. The bloody deed was done—a monarch was executed; but his partisans so contrived their revenge, that the very man whose life had been a series of attacks against the liberties of England, seemed to yield up his existence a martyr to those liberties!

Cromwell had chosen. The army now governed every thing; and though retaining the hearts of his soldiers, he had broken with every other class of his fellow-citizens. England had nearly ceased to struggle. A few only, comparatively, of loyal and determined spirits, were still in violent opposition. The two other portions of the British kingdom, governed by the Stuarts, also were hostile to the new republic, and though in rebellion against Charles I, now acknowledged the authority of Charles II, who was then in Scotland, whither he had fled to escape the fate of his father. He had consented to profess himself a Presbyterian, and subscribe to the covenant, and, in return for these concessions, the austere Puritans who reigned in Edinburgh, permitted him to hold, under their supervision and control, a solemn and melancholy court, at Holy Rood.

But, this mock show of royalty was of short duration. Cromwell annihilated the military force in Scotland, and Charles II, barely escaping with his life, became a fugitive and a wanderer. Thinking that his aim, and that of his adherents, would be to reach the coast of France, every port and fishing-hamlet

was guarded by Cromwell's soldiers; his ships thronged the channel, with orders to take them alive if possible—if not, to shoot them down like dogs.

During this time, Cromwell ruled, and was victorious in nearly every engagement. Many peers of the realm, not already proscribed, remained sullenly in their country-houses, and took no part in public affairs. Some, however, who had suffered and given up all in the cause of the king, were still doing all in their power to destroy the "usurper," and were determined, if in the power of mortals, to place the young king upon the throne of his ancestors. They considered any means justifiable which would serve this much-desired end, and declared their willingness to devote their lives to its consummation.

Among the most determined of these, and one who stands preëminent in these pages, was the Earl of Sussex. He had shared the captivity of Charles I, but his sentence of death had been commuted: instead of losing his head, *he was condemned to have his right hand severed from his wrist.* But he was not yet powerless, and was resolved upon avenging the death of his king, and this indignity upon himself.

One night, with a boat-load of armed men, in whom he placed the firmest trust, and under cover of darkness such as seldom visits the earth, he glided over the black waters, boarded one of Cromwell's war-ships, murdered all on board, manned her with his own followers, escaped down the Thames, and, assuming the command in person, her bristling sides were ever in the wake of the bull-dogs of Cromwell—terrible, death-dealing, and invincible.

CHAPTER II

RED HAND.

AMONG the fishing-hamlets on the borders of the British channel, was one superior to all others, containing many brave and loyal spirits, who would not brook the power of the "Protector." Preëminent among these, and the ruling spirit of the hamlet, was a young man of twenty-two summers, and whom we will call Richard Graham. He owned a large smack, trimly and neatly built, and generally returned laden, from all fishing excursions on the channel.

Among the nobles, whose stately residences lined the coast, was one who had sworn allegiance to the Protector, and who had received numerous pledges of his patron's esteem. This man was the Earl of Brander. His castle stood upon a high bluff, above the fishing hamlet of "Scarphoot," where his family usually resided. This family consisted of his wife and two children, a son and daughter.

It would be difficult to find a greater dissimilarity between two persons, than existed between this brother and sister. The son was his father's pride, and a mother's joy. Haughty, arrogant, proud and boastful, they felt that they might safely rely upon him to sustain the honor of their house. Lucy, his gentle and lovely sister, was amiable and unassuming, entertaining good-will and kindly regard for all. This

beautiful girl was left much to herself. She came and went at pleasure, attended only by her maid, but often alone roamed over the grand old place and amused herself as she wished. The Earl of Branden and his son for certain reasons became active partisans of the Protector. The young lord, William Branden, owned a splendid yacht, which was manned by kindred spirits, and commanded by him in person. With this craft and crew he performed the office of channel spy for Cromwell.

A more deadly feud could not exist, than that between the Earls of Sussex and Branden. That terrible war-dragon of the channel, commanded by Sussex (or "Red Hand," as he was called by his enemies, in derision for having lost his hand), was a great source of fear and annoyance to Cromwell and his partisans. Her armament was superior to any vessel of war afloat, and the terrible prowess of her commander struck terror to every heart.

One morning Cromwell was aroused at an early hour. An officer of marines had called, demanding admittance upon important business. Cromwell obeyed the summons, and inquired to what fortunate circumstance he was indebted for so early a visit.

"I came," said the officer, "to inform you that the *Thunderer* was boarded last night, every soul murdered, and among them my only son, a midshipman, lay weltering in his gore, and a paper lay upon his bosom, upon which was written, with a dagger's point dipped in blood, '*Red Hand. Death to the Usurper!*'"

“Red Hand again? The fiend!” muttered Cromwell, through his white lips. “We *must* rid ourselves of him. We must send a force sufficient to annihilate him, and all his band. Away! Again man the *Thunderer* with the flower of the British navy, and send them in pursuit of this one-handed devil. Nor let me again hear that Red Hand is victorious.”

“I fear it will be a hopeless undertaking,” remarked the officer. “The fiends indeed seem in league with him. We shall never be safe while he is above water. I, at least, shall do all that is possible to avenge the cruel death of my only son.”

The officer departed upon his mission, and soon after entered the office of the Admiralty.

“We have orders,” said he, “again to man the *Thunderer*, with the flower of Britain’s navy, and proceed against Red Hand. He has again been at his bloody work, and my poor boy was among his victims. Not even youth and innocence can escape him. Oh! that we could take this bloodhound!”

“Try it!” seemed hissed in the officer’s very ear. He sprung aside as if stung by an adder, and looked fearfully around, but no one was near save the officer of the Admiralty, and a poor, trembling mendicant, leaning upon his staff, near the door. Ashamed of his fears, he said nothing, and thought, perhaps, grief and trouble for the cruel and unnatural death of his son, had made him nervous.

When their arrangements were completed, and the preliminaries all settled for an attack upon the daring channel cruiser, the two separated. The old mendicant also proceeded slowly on his way, his long gray

hair blown about by the wind, and his aged and trembling form leaning heavily upon his staff. A keen observer might have seen a pair of dark, piercing eyes, bright as diamonds, flashing beneath the old slouched hat which he wore.

Cromwell took his usual after-dinner *siësta*, but his slumbers were strangely troubled, for he started nervously in his sleep. At length he sprung up, all bathed in a sweat of commingled terror and anger. Yet, no one was near, but, on his breast was pinned a paper, upon which was written :

"Cromwell sleeps soundly, but Red Hand is ever near!"

Trembling in every limb, he shouted :

"What, ho! the guard!" who quickly came running in to see the cause of the tumult. "What kind of watch and ward do ye keep, that my most private apartments are entered by this bloody fiend? Behold!" and he produced the paper, upon which they gazed in speechless astonishment. "Double the guard!" he shouted, "and search in every direction, and take the fiend, dead or alive."

That afternoon the *Avenger*, Sussex's ship, lay at anchor around a woody point, not far from shore. A boat put off, and in a few minutes, Red Hand leaped upon the deck. Calling his officers and men aft, he told them of his visit to London, his entrance into the sleeping apartment of Cromwell, the paper he left upon his breast, and his terrible fright; of the terror everywhere manifested at the fate of the

Thunderer's crew, and their preparations for an attack upon the *Avenger*.

"Now, my lads," said he, "we must be in readiness, to give them a fitting reception."

Cheer upon cheer, for the king and Red Hand, went up from three hundred men devoted to their leader and his cause, and then all were on the alert. The canvas covering was stripped from the deck guns, the ports opened, and the metal run out below. A strip of canvas was drawn around the vessel to conceal this lower tier of guns, which, at a short distance, had the appearance of a white stripe around the hull, but which could, by means of ropes, be instantly withdrawn. Powder and ball were handed up, water was made ready for use, and, by sunset, all was prepared. After hauling out some distance from land, the *Avenger* came to an anchor and lay rocking gracefully upon the heaving tide, awaiting the appearance of the foe. Red Hand had retired to his cabin; the men were concealed behind the low bulwarks, one single lantern was swinging in the rigging, and the officer of the deck, with a glass in his hand, was scouring the deep in every direction in search of the expected foe. Hours passed on; the moon arose in cloudless splendor, shedding her pure light upon the emerald waves, and changed them to a silvery hue, as they danced and sparkled beneath her bright beams.

CHAPTER III.

THE FISHERMAN AND HIS PASSION.

"WHAT ails you, Richard?" said Mrs. Graham, as her son entered the cottage, with a face pale and rigid, lips white and compressed, and a brow black and lowering.

He was a handsome youth, with dark-blue eyes, hair black, features finely cut. He sat down upon a bench outside the door, without speaking, while his mother, with a tender expression upon her troubled face, sat down beside him, and taking his hand, said:

"Richard, my son, what has happened? What has disturbed you so? I scarcely know you. You are not like yourself."

He laid his head upon her shoulder, and, in a scarcely audible voice, murmured:

"My head aches, mother."

"That is not all, my son," she answered, stroking back the disordered hair, and fondly kissing his forehead. "Will you not confide in your mother, what has disturbed you so? We should have no secrets from each other."

"Curse him!" he muttered, through his clenched teeth.

"Whom are you cursing?" again his mother asked.

“I will tell you,” dear mother, he said, as he raised his head from her shoulder. “I went out yesterday morning to fish; I had rounded the great rock at the foot of Scarphoot, when I saw lady Lucy Branden coming down the path, with a little basket in her hand, looking for shells and seaweed. She saw me, and, bowing and smiling sweetly, as she always does, asked me ‘if I knew where she could find any pretty specimens?’ I did know, and asked permission to show her, or gather some for her. She eagerly accepted my offer, and asked me ‘when I would be at leisure?’ ‘Any time,’ I answered, ‘which will suit your convenience; now, if you will accept the poor accommodations I have to offer.’ ‘Oh, thank you,’ she exclaimed, and, as I approached the rock upon which she stood, she held out her little hand, and I helped her into the boat, and arranged the great bear-skin for her to sit upon. ‘How nice this is,’ she said; ‘I never can get my brother to take me out in his boat. Would you mind rowing out a little way into the channel? I do so love to be on the water!’ Of course I did not mind, and we paddled about, talking and laughing. At length she came and sat down beside me, and asked me if I would teach her to trim the sail, and steer the boat? I gave her the necessary instructions, and she was soon able to do it as well as myself, at which she laughed gleefully as a little child. It was now nearly sundown, and we prepared for our return. ‘I declare,’ she exclaimed, ‘I have forgotten all about the shells! Do you think you will have leisure to show me, some other time?’ Of

course I promised, and when we reached the landing, I assisted her to the shore. As it was now nearly dark, I begged permission to see her safe home, so, arm in arm, we climbed the rocky bank. I told her of a little basket of shells I had at home, and begged her acceptance of them. She thanked me so sweetly, and seemed so gratified. We had now reached the gate leading to her father's grounds; I excused myself, but she insisted upon my going in to see her mother, but I declined. 'When shall I see you again?' she asked, holding out her hand. 'To-morrow,' I replied, 'if agreeable, I will bring the shells?' 'Oh, do,' she said, in the sweetest voice. I pressed her hands respectfully, and, bowing low, I left her."

"What kind of a young lady is this Miss Branden?" said Mrs. Graham, with a troubled look.

"She's an angel, mother—lovely as a dream, pure and innocent as a child, with all the noble qualities and high aspirations of a woman."

"Richard," said his mother, solemnly, "you must see her no more! Her father is one of Cromwell's most trusted and confidential adherents, and would you mate with an enemy of your king? Besides, my son, she is young, and scarcely knows her own mind as yet, and even were she willing to take one so far beneath her in worldly position, her parents would never permit it, and this familiarity of intercourse is only laying up misery for you both. For *her* sake, my beloved son, if not for your own, see her no more!"

"Mother, I have not the courage. I love her! Oh, God! how I love her!"

“But consider, Richard. She is of a haughty race, who would look with scorn on a poor fisherman.”

“*That* they shall never do! I have education, pride, ambition, ability. I have now an object to gain. I will yet carve my way to a position equal to her own.”

“But, my son, look at the precarious position of our king. If he falls, all who declare allegiance to him share the same fate. I have no hope, but for you to live and die as you are.”

“I am not ashamed of my profession, dear mother. If not a high, it is at least an honorable one; but, if my life is spared, you shall yet be proud of your son.”

“I am already proud of my son,” said the good woman, her eyes glistening with tears. “You never can be more to me than you are now; whatever station you may hold, you will still be to your mother the dearest and most dutiful of sons. But you have not yet told me whom you were cursing, nor what disturbed you so?”

“I ought to tell you, mother. This morning, agreeably to my promise, I took the little basket of shells to Miss Branden. I met her at the foot of Scarphoot, and she received them with such delight, and expressed so much surprise at their beauty, and the many different varieties, that I was emboldened to say more than I usually did. We sat down beneath the old oak and conversed upon different subjects, while her maid gathered seaweed as it floated in with the tide, or was brought in by the waves. I discovered new beauties every moment to admire and

venerate. I discovered the high tone of thought, the deep feeling, and the superiority of her mind. We discussed the merits of different authors, and I found that those I most admired were her most particular favorites. Some time we spent thus, when, fearful of intruding upon her time, I arose and offered my hand, to bid good-morning. She took it, and asked me 'if I was going out in my boat this morning?' I answered in the affirmative. 'Would you take a passenger?' she asked, while a rosy blush mantled her lovely cheek. 'Most gladly,' I replied; and hand in hand we descended the rocky bank. I unmoored my boat and brought it around. 'May Susie, my maid, go, too?' she timidly asked. 'Certainly,' I answered; so, helping them in, we again pushed off. 'How delightful!' she exclaimed. 'How fresh is this morning air, and how merrily the waves sparkle and dance!' and her sweet eyes sparkled and danced as merrily. 'Oh! I could live upon the water, Mr. Graham; it always makes me feel so blithe and joyous.' Thus we sat, chatting pleasantly, upon different subjects. How happy I felt with that pure girl by my side, listening to her musical voice, as it blended with the rippling waters! Suddenly we were startled by hearing a rough voice hail: 'Heave to, you rascal, or I'll sink you!' We looked around, and just beyond, having rounded the point, we saw a yacht approaching. 'Tis Master William,' said Susie, in affright. 'It is my brother,' exclaimed Lucy, trembling, and turning pale as death. 'Heave to, you rascal!' again came over the water; but, not heeding the menaces, which I now saw were

intended for me, I rowed carelessly along, without seeming to notice him. The next moment the yacht was precipitated with terrible force against the bow of my small boat, and stove her in. At the same instant two men leaped on board, and, seizing Lucy and her maid, bore them to the yacht, amid the shouts and jeers of her insolent commander and crew. This had been done so quickly and suddenly, that it gave me no time for thought, and now, it was all I could do to keep afloat. I could hear Lucy, begging in piteous tones for her brother to take me on board, for my boat was sinking; but, he heeded not her entreaties, and cheer upon cheer rent the air, when they saw me battling for my life with the rushing waters. A pistol-shot was fired at me; but, happily, I at that moment stooped to bail out the water, and the ball passed over my head. By straining every nerve, and bailing for my life, I succeeded in bringing my poor stove boat ashore. She is dear to me, with recollections of the past, and I could not bear to lose her. Had she gone down, despite all my exertions, I must have perished with her, for the distance from the land was too great to swim."

"Terrible!" said Mrs. Graham, turning deadly pale.

"Yes," replied Richard, "and Lord William Branden and I have a heavy reckoning to settle. I have borne much from him, for his sweet sister's sake. Several times he has grossly insulted me in her presence, but she tried so hard to make amends, by her own kind attentions, telling me it was his way, and begging me not to mind him; but there is a limit to

endurance, and not even for her, dear as she is to me, will I let this pass."

"Oh, Richard, my son," plead his mother, "I beg of you, do nothing rashly. He would think no more of shooting you than he would a dog. He is the son of a great lord, and you are only a fisherman."

"Well, time will tell," he answered, moodily. "The fisherman may yet have power over him. We may yet meet on equal terms. Until then, I bide my time. Let vengeance sleep for the present, but Richard Graham, fisherman though he is, will never forget."

"One more promise you must make your mother," said Mrs. Graham. "See Lucy Branden no more. The dearer she is to you, so much greater the reason that you should keep aloof from her. There is Mabel Forester, with whom you have lived on terms of intimacy for many years. She has beauty, is pure and amiable, and loves you. Take her, and be satisfied to continue your old occupation, where all look up to you, and acknowledge your superiority, and you will be far happier. This is what we all are striving for. Employ the means which will the more certainly insure it to you."

"Mother, I *must* see Lucy again. I am vain enough to think that all the interest in her fresh young heart is enlisted in my favor, though no word of love has passed between us. She can but see the nature of my feelings toward herself, for I could not hide them. No, my mind is made up. I seek a higher sphere of action. I must see her again, confess my love, and acquaint her with my determination to win

a position equal to her own—to offer her a position which her parents, even, can not scorn. Mabel is not for me. There is Edward Gregory, as fine a lad as the sun ever shone upon, a true royalist, and in heart worthy the love of a princess. He loves Mabel. Let them mate together and be happy. My aspirations are higher. I could never remain here contented.”

Just then Mabel entered. She was employed every day at the castle. Lady Branden had several young girls embroidering tapestry for a new summer-house she had in contemplation upon the brow of the cliff, overhanging Scarphoot.

The next morning Mabel loitered; Mrs. Graham inquired if she was not going to the castle? She blushed and hung down her head. Mrs. Graham noticing her unusual embarrassment, insisted upon knowing the cause; when she learned that the young Lord Branden had offered her some rudeness, which was warmly resented by his generous-hearted sister.

“For shame!” Lucy said, her face flushing crimson, and her blue eyes flashing fire. “I will tell papa of this.”

“Do so as quickly as you please,” he insolently replied. “I shall also tell him of your disgraceful meetings with that rascally, low-bred fisherman, and I swear, that the next time I catch him upon these premises, or you in his company, I will call my groom to horsewhip him within an ace of his life. Remember *that*, my lady, and beware how you thwart me, or meddle in my affairs.”

“Oh! Miss Lucy is an angel, if such a being

exists," said Mabel, warmly. "She told him he had done enough upon Mr. Graham for no offense whatever, and might live to see the day he would repent it."

Madam Graham had feared that the feelings of this young girl toward her son were of a nature to affect her future peace. She therefore held a long conversation with her, and confided to her, as to a dear friend and well-wisher of her son, his resolution to seek a different field of action in which to develop those faculties with which nature had unmistakably endowed him, and informed her of his firm and unalterable resolve to sink or swim with the young king. She spoke, too, of Edward Gregory, lauded his noble qualities, and bade her think well, e'er she refused to listen, should he plead his suit. "For," said she, "you are young and pretty. Many suitors will present themselves, with far less honorable intentions than those which actuate Edward. He is the soul of honor, and loves you well. For myself, I am growing old, and can not long be of any use to any one, only a burden upon the dear ones upon whom I must depend in age and helplessness. Richard, though a sincere friend to you, will be far away, and, in these troublous times, we can not tell what may be his fate. Think well of this, my child, and shape your course accordingly."

Mabel, with flushed cheek, and eyes suffused with tears, sought her own little room, and, bolting the door, sat down to think.

"Oh! is it so?" she murmured; "must Richard leave his happy, peaceful home, where he is beloved

above all others, for scenes of strife and bloodshed? Richard, who, since I was a little child, has been dearer to me than aught on earth! Lady Lucy, too, *loves* him. I saw it when Lord William spoke so ugly of him, and called him a presumptuous, low-bred hind. How her beautiful face flushed, and how bitterly she resented it. Yes, she loves him, and there is no hope for me; but she is all goodness and sweetness, and well worthy a heart like Richard's. I, his friend and foster-sister, should rejoice at his good fortune in winning one so pure and lovely. Yet, oh! how can I? This heart of mine will rebel. Oh! how I have loved him, and he knows it not!"

She could not have lived a second time through the agony of that moment. The vessel in which she had embarked every hope of her heart, had gone down, but Mabel's vitality made her strong to suffer.

Oh, how many are watched by loving eyes, whose light they never see; how many are cared for by loving hearts whose secret they may never know!

"I will try and forget him," at length she exclaimed. "Forget! Bid the sun forget to shine, bid the moon forget to give her light, and then bid me forget one that is sun, moon, and stars to my soul."

Long and bitterly did she commune with that heart, until, hearing voices in the outer room, she bathed her flushed and tear-stained face, arranged her hair, and, opening the door, greeted with a sad smile Richard and Edward, who had just entered the house. Richard saluted her with the frank warmth of a brother; Edward, with the shy devotion of a lover. She noticed the difference, and tried to detach her thoughts from one, and fasten them on the other.

CHAPTER IV.

RED HAND'S PRIZE AND RICHARD'S LOSS.

It was night, and the moon at her full, rode in cloudless splendor over the arching dome of the starry sky. The inhabitants of the fishing-hamlet were preparing for repose, when the deep boom of a cannon rolled over the water and echoed far and near along the rocky shore.

Richard bounded to his feet :

“What is that ?” he exclaimed. “Can it be upon the young king they are firing ? I wonder if he is striving to cross the channel, and has been discovered ? Let us go, Ned ! Hasten, and unmoor your boat. Curse the fiend who destroyed mine ! If we can do nothing more, we can stand between our lawful monarch and his enemies, and die, if need be, in his place.”

The young men soon were paddling over the trackless waste of waters, in the direction of the fierce cannonading which was now going on.

“There they are,” exclaimed Richard, as, rounding a point which jutted far out into the channel, they came in sight of two large vessels of war, seeming determined upon each other's destruction.

“Surely that is Red Hand's ship, the *Avenger*, and the other as certainly is the *Thunderer*. Can it be

that the king is on board either the one or the other? Let us range as near as possible, and be ready to lend our assistance if needed."

The rigging of Red Hand's ship was blazing with battle-lanterns, and the faces of all on board were distinctly visible through the small glass in Richard's hands, as they flew from place to place in the performance of their various duties. Their commander stood upon the quarter-deck, giving his orders, calm and composed, a look of unflinching determination fairly speaking from his noble countenance. All on board seemed to hang upon his every word and obey his every mandate, with but one thought, to die for their leader if need be. The contending vessels literally seemed fiery dragons spouting flames, as broadside after broadside was hurled at each other. The air seemed filled with flying lead and iron, and resounded with the cries, groans, shrieks, curses and shouts of triumph. It soon grew almost stifling with the dense clouds of hot and sulphurous smoke flashing over the face of the waters.

The two friends lay upon their oars, gazing upon the scene with an intensity of interest too deep for words. At length Richard broke the silence:

"Thank God, Red Hand will conquer!"

"Think you so?" asked Edward.

"Sure of it," replied his friend. "See, not a lantern is displaced."

"They may be playing upon his hull, to sink him."

"Take the glass," said Richard, "and you will see more distinctly."

His friend took the glass, and gazed as if spell-bound. The rigging of the *Thunderer* was nearly all shot away, her commander's arm in a sling, the colors hanging in tatters from the mast, and four or five men working for their lives at the pumps to keep the ship afloat. At this moment the *Avenger* veered round, and, with her guns loaded to the muzzle, poured another broadside into the devoted ship, which settled her down. The new and brilliant colors of Cromwell, torn and pierced with shot, fell upon the bloodstained deck; the mast went by the board; the white flag of submission was run up, for longer contention was useless, and the *Avenger*, with the red cross of England flying at her peak, bore down upon her prey.

All was in perfect order upon the ship of Sussex. No signs of the fearful conflict, save an occasional bandaged head or arm. The decks were cleanly washed; no signs of death—no bloody hands or gory decks! The commander was pacing the quarter-deck with an expression of scorn upon his stern features. At this moment the officer who had been sent to take possession of the captured vessel returned, bringing with him her commander, Lieutenant, and five men—all who survived of that large force, the “flower of the British navy,” which had been sent out, confident of success in ridding Cromwell of that terrible scourge, “The Demon of the Channel,” as the Protector termed his enemy.

Red Hand ordered his prisoners before him.

“Shall I,” he thought, “retaliate for those brave and loyal spirits who have languished in the prisons,

at last to die by the ax or gibbet of the usurper? No, I will not be quite the demon he calls me; I will not be a fiend because he chooses to be one; I will give them a chance for life and liberty;" and turning toward them, as they stood guarded upon the quarter, he addressed the commander of the *Thunderer*:

"Do you swear fealty to king Charles, or do you acknowledge allegiance only to the usurper?"

"I have chosen my path," he moodily replied, "and must submit to my fate, whatever it may be, without murmuring. Such are the fortunes of war. 'Tis noble to die for one's country, die in a glorious cause."

"Do you call that cause glorious which forswears your lawful king, and owns allegiance to a usurper and regicide?"

"We would be free—we would rid ourselves of a despot," was the reply.

"This, then, is your answer," returned Red Hand.

"I can give no other," the man replied; "but, permit me to ask, what power *you* have to dictate terms to those taken in arms against the king and his misguided followers?"

"The power of right and duty; the power delegated by God and justice," was the earl's haughty reply, as, with a majestic wave of his hand, they were ordered away from his presence.

The earl had intended that, if possible, the *Thunderer* should be taken to La Hague for repairs, but news was brought that she was sinking fast, as she had received several shots below the water-line.

"Secure all that is valuable on board, in arms and

ammunition, and let her go. Better at the bottom, than armed against our liege."

Doubly fired by patriotism and loyalty, Richard, with his friend, returned to the hamlet just as day was dawning.

"How glorious," he exclaimed, "to die in a glorious cause!"

He was too deeply moved in soul to talk or to be talked to; yet, during the day, he contrived again to see Lucy—to whose sweet influence his nature now alone confessed its homage. He informed her that it was to be their last meeting for the present.

"Why is this?" she cried. "Have I offended you, or has the reckless folly of my brother caused you to regard me less kindly?"

"Neither, dear lady; but I must fly from here—fly from you, whom I love better than life. I see my presumptuous folly in permitting my love to be placed upon one so far above me; I can not expect one occupying the high position which you hold to stoop to one so lowly as I."

"Stop!" she exclaimed, her blue eyes swimming in tears. "If *that* is all, set yourself at rest. Earthly distinctions are precarious and fleeting, and make but slight difference when the heart asserts itself. You are a Royalist, and so, at heart, am I, though my family are with the Protector. I love you for your devotion to our fallen monarch, and trust the time is not far distant which will see him seated upon the throne of his ancestors."

"Dear lady," said Richard, much excited, "if you

would only permit me to hope that at some future day I may claim this dear hand, I shall go forth 'conquering and to conquer,' and will yet make myself worthy of you. I am not uneducated; they tell me that I have talents, and I know that I have ambition; what will I not achieve with such a prize to win? I shall carve my way to greatness—shall command distinction by my acts!"

"Richard," said the noble girl, "you possess personal qualities which a monarch on his throne would be proud to claim; but, if it makes any difference to you, I say go, *dear* Richard, and this hand is yours whenever you come to claim it."

He knelt at her feet and pressed the proffered hand to his burning lips with a fervent "God bless you," and left the spot. He did not see, as he passed, the figure of the young Lord Branden, concealed from view by the shrubbery.

"You low-born, insolent hind! you *dare* to raise your eyes so far above you! 'Tis likely I will suffer you to disgrace me by claiming relationship. We'll see, we'll see, my magnanimous little sister," muttered the young noble, as he watched Graham until he passed out of sight.

A week or two after this the earl had secretly conveyed his family to London. It may be, and doubtless was, that all the family was acquainted with his reasons for this unexpected change, except Lucy. It was with a heavy heart that she bade adieu to a spot endeared to her by so many fond recollections. But it did not avail her. Seldom was

she consulted upon subjects pertaining to her own happiness; she was not, therefore, surprised at the secrecy manifested in the movements of the household, although she was deeply grieved at the change.

Arrived at her new home, she was introduced into the gayest society in Cromwell's court, for even this Puritan "representative of the people" claimed the royal prerogative of holding one. Indeed, "King Oliver" was more than a whispered word among his followers.

Lucy was like a fairy being dropped from another sphere, and found no congenial associate in that gay and dissolute assemblage. She pined for her old home and the rural haunts where she had been accustomed to wander, communing with nature—a very child of nature. And did she not also pine for the society of one like herself—a child of freedom and a lover of the pure and good? She was a woman, and loved as a woman, blind to all the greatness of others, but faithful to the glory of her own idol. Pomp, position, the pride of power—what were they all compared with her happiness and her hopes of life?

One morning, at an early hour, Lucy was summoned to her mother's apartment—something so unusual that she entered the room with a perturbed step. Yet she was not a child any longer. A few short weeks of sorrow and serious thought had made her a woman—strong in her resolves and firm in her will to work out her own destiny.

Her mother gazed upon her with an expression of surprise, not unmixed with admiration for her

peerless loveliness, and, motioning her to a stool at her feet, said :

"Lucy, Lord Dudley has asked your hand in marriage, and your father has granted the boon."

"I hope not," the maiden answered. "I thought I already had given father sufficient proofs to convince him that it never can be with my consent. There is too great a disparity in age, and more than all, I can never love him, mother."

"We do not expect your consent," answered her mother, "only acquiescence ; and as for *love*, there is no such thing in high life. Girls marry for fortune and position. Ridiculous, to talk of love ! Leave that to the poor and humble ; it is all they have."

"Mother, Lord Dudley is vain, proud, arrogant, cruel ; he is, I am sure, a stranger to all the finer feelings of the human heart. He is no fit companion for any pure-minded woman. I never can respect, never live happily with him."

"We do not expect you to live happily, or any other way, with him. You will have separate establishments, *of course*. It is a splendid match for you, and all you have to do is to make yourself agreeable to your husband when you do see him. You will be the envy of all your acquaintances. What lady can hold so brilliant a court, or be mistress of so magnificent an establishment as Lady Dudley ? So let me hear no more weak objections ; be like a nobleman's daughter, and play the queen, regally, as you now have the power to do."

With this injunction the mother dismissed her.

She obeyed as if in a dream. Dismissing her !

maid, she threw herself upon her couch and groaned in bitterness of heart. The beautiful shells which Richard had given her, lay carefully arranged in a little ebony cabinet. She took them up, one by one, and pressed them to her heart and lips.

"Where is he now?" she murmured.

She drew a large easy-chair to the window looking in the direction of Scarphoot, and gazed off sadly upon the setting sun as it sunk beneath the waves of the distant sea. The melancholy depicted upon her beautiful face it was painful to see—painful that one so young and pure should suffer so at the cruel behest of mammon. Alas! how many as pure and good have suffered sacrifice at the same unholy and indecent altar!

"I told him that this hand was his whenever he should claim it. It is pledged before God, and never can be given to another. Is there really no escape from this loathsome alliance, prepared for me? I covet neither wealth, rank, nor station. Happier far would I be, the wife of Richard Graham, the fisherman of Scarphoot, than the bride of the proudest lord in England's realm."

She covered her face with her hands, and the tears stole silently down her cheeks—the only vent of a heart wounded to the very core.

As Lucy left her mother's presence, her father entered the room.

"Have you spoken to Lucy concerning her marriage with Lord Dudley?" he asked.

"I have," Lady Branden replied; "she says she has already told you it can never be, with her consent."

"She braves me, does she?" he exclaimed. "Or is she ignorant of the great power and wealth to be conferred upon her?"

"She repudiates all with seeming scorn," was the answer; "and, if I guess aright, I think she will not wed Lord Dudley because she wishes to wed somebody else."

"William was right. That low-bred fisherman, with his fair face and contributions of shells, has completely turned her foolish little head; but it matters not. It is easy to undo that mischief by a word of stern command. She is a very dutiful child, and will obey me, I have no doubt. Yes, yes, I shall have the affair speedily brought to a close. Great wealth and rank united! Such matches are scarce nowadays. Foolish girl! But no more of the fisherman! See that preparations are made for solemnizing the nuptials in three weeks' time," he added, in a peremptory tone, to his wife. "My word is pledged."

With this he left the room.

Lucy was still sitting with her face buried in her hands, and was so busy communing with her own thoughts that she had not heard the entrance of her father. The earl gazed upon her for some time in silence. At length he spoke:

"Lucy, I little expected this from you. I thought you were old enough to put off childish things. I have watched over you from infancy with parental care, and now I learn, with surprise, that you wish to thwart me in my efforts to see you placed in a position equal to my station and your own merits."

"Father, my hand is promised to another; it is not mine to give."

"This to me!" said her father, in a voice terrible from suppressed passion. "Do you dare to tell *me* that you have promised your hand without my knowledge or sanction? Prepare yourself to receive Lord Dudley for your husband in three weeks' time."

"Father, my heart is another's—my hand is pledged. I can not break that pledge, without breaking my heart. Are you prepared to make such a sacrifice as *that*?" she asked, in a tone of mingled duty and entreaty.

"What madness is this? It is a mere child's whim, to be forgotten in a month of court life. I do not ask you to break your heart, but I do expect you to become Lady Dudley within the time named. So, make up your mind to the honor."

With this order he left the room, and she was again alone with her misery.

The sun had already risen above the eastern horizon and scattered his bright rays through the room, when Lucy awoke from her restless slumbers. It was some time before she could recall the events of the preceding evening. The words of her father at length came to startle her into a full consciousness of her wretchedness.

"In *three weeks*," she moaned, in the uttermost despair. "Oh! where is Richard? What will he think of this? Oh! that I might die! Oh, God, in mercy take me to thyself!"

CHAPTER V.

THE ROUNDHEADS AND THEIR PREY.

ABOUT the middle of the afternoon succeeding the fight between the *Avenger* and the *Thunderer*, the hamlet of Scarphoot was filled with Cromwell's Roundhead troopers, sent to guard the court, and to intercept any fugitive Royalist who might be hoping in this way to reach the court of France. Many of these troopers came to the cottage of Mrs. Graham. Wherever they went they took, as a right, what was given, and compelled what came reluctantly. Mrs. Graham was entertaining them to the best of her ability, and led them to suppose, without saying as much, that both herself and son were followers of Cromwell.

The cottage of Mrs. Graham stood near the water; hence the leader and three of his band chose this spot as their post of observation and guard. Others were sent to different stations around the hamlet.

These troopers were sitting in the outer room, lingering about the door, and lounging upon the benches. The widow Graham had just sent Mabel to them with a fresh supply of spiced liquor, and the good woman herself was in the kitchen preparing a small cask of the same, to be ready when called for, when she heard a low rap upon the window. Looking up she

saw a person there, evidently begging to come in. He was a tall, pale-faced man, with deep black eyes, and long black hair, travel-worn, torn, and dusty, and sinking with fatigue. He wore a slouched hat, which nearly concealed his features, but it was evident that he was a man of rank carefully disguised. Sure that he was some fugitive Royalist trying to escape from Cromwell's myrmidons, she told him that the Roundheads were everywhere, even in her own cottage.

"Can you not conceal me somewhere, my good woman?" said he, "I am sickening with fatigue, and can travel no longer."

"I will do my best," she said, and helping him to climb into the window.

Pointing to a ladder, she bade him ascend quickly, which he did. The matron then prepared a basket of provisions with a bottle of wine and a jar of water, and, passing them up, told him there was a bed to lie upon and rest, enjoining him to keep perfectly still. A signal of three gentle raps upon the trap, would be either herself or her son, whom she promised to send to him, and who would die to save the king, or any of his friends.

The wayfarer held out a hand as white as snow, upon which blazed a magnificent diamond, and, grasping her's, pressed it to his lips.

"You have saved my life," he whispered, "thanks, thanks!"

Without another word, but a warning gesture to be silent, the trap was closed, and the ladder removed; an act scarcely performed, when one of the

troopers came out into the kitchen. Looking around with an air of inquiry, he said :

“Who was it you were just talking so earnestly with, my good dame?”

“My gardener,” she promptly replied. “He reports the destruction of some of my most valuable plants. It must be the handiwork of some of your men.”

“Can’t help it, ma’am. It’s our business to take care of Royalists, not plants; but, by the way, where is this garden of yours? I don’t see it.”

“Round upon the south side of the hamlet I have a small garden-spot, which is my sole dependence.”

Happy that her ruse had succeeded so well, and fearing that any sound from above might reach his watchful ears, and seeing him disposed to linger, she told him that she considered the kitchen her own private apartment, and did not wish to be intruded upon. They were welcome to the other rooms, but the kitchen was sacred to her alone.

So, with a yawn, he left, no wiser, as yet.

Meanwhile the Earl of Sussex was cruising in the channel, picking up all the fugitives who were so fortunate as to escape in fishermen’s boats, or standing between them and the vessels of Cromwell, until they were safe. This was now getting to be a very precarious undertaking, as every spot along the coast was securely guarded.

When Richard Graham came home in the evening, his mother informed him of the presence of

the Roundheads, and also of her guest in the loft above. "What if it should happen to be the king himself?" she said.

"Oh, mother!" exclaimed Richard, "if I could only be the means of effecting his escape, or perform some service for him!"

"I promised to send you to him as soon as you came in," said his mother. "Go, Mabel, and talk to those troopers a little while, that Richard may gain the loft above."

Three raps upon the the trap, and it was cautiously opened. Richard ascended and closed it behind him. He informed his guest who he was, and gazed with absorbing interest upon his pale, worn, but noble countenance. The fugitive, in whispers, expressed his sincere thanks to himself and his mother for their kindness, and begged him, if it was in his power, to help him to reach the French coast.

"I am," said he, "a true friend to the king, and all who assist me are his friends also. If he rises they rise with him; if he falls, they will have the consciousness of duty performed, and the approval of their own hearts to sustain them. I have great hopes," he continued, "of seeing Charles upon the throne of his ancestors."

Richard, with his fine countenance blazing with enthusiasm, expressed his allegiance to his sovereign, and declared his determination to follow his fortunes, promising to do all in his power to effect his guest's escape. He then nervously opened the trap and closed it behind him, and the weary fugitive was again alone.

It was now nearly dusk, and the troopers, after partaking of the excellent supper prepared for them, and drinking deep of the spiced liquors, were scattered around, snoring loudly. Richard and his mother, after searching around to see that there were no spies nor eavesdroppers prowling about, consulted in whispers what was best to be done in this great emergency.

"I have no boat," said Richard, bitterly; "but I can get Edward Gregory's, and his assistance, also. We will make our preparations as for a fishing excursion. We must have provisions and water, as it may be some time e'er we reach the coast of France. The ships of Cromwell throng the channel, and this coast, upon every side and at every point, is guarded. I will go immediately and see Ned, and have this over as soon as possible.

Ned Gregory entered into the project of his friend with his usual impetuous generosity. His boat had recently been repaired, and, for a fishing-smack, was a very rapid sailer. Preparing the boat for the expedition, seeing that every thing needful was on board, and having her at the place of rendezvous at the appointed time, was left to him; while Richard's part was to get his guest safely to it. The place of meeting was at the foot of Scarphoot rock, beneath whose moss-grown summit there was an immense cave, all of whose depths and mysteries had never yet been explored. This spot was chosen as it left but a short distance to walk before reaching the boat. But short as was the distance, the danger was imminent, as they must run the gauntlet between

files of armed Roundheads. But Richard did not despair of success. He had embarked his fortunes and life in the enterprise, and was determined to succeed or perish in the attempt.

Lucy, after receiving the terrible sentence of her father, felt that she would have willingly laid down and died; but as this boon was denied her, she felt a craving for sympathy and advice. Seating herself at a table she wrote a note, and, calling a trusty servant, bade him take it to the residence of the Earl of Clarendon. His daughter, Mary, had been her schoolmate and friend, and their feelings and sympathies were those of attached friends. She was near Lucy's own age, and, from constant association, they had become dear as sisters, and harbored no secrets from each other. Mary's was a warm and constant temperament, and her feelings were strongly enlisted in the welfare of her friend.

"Why," she exclaimed, after warmly greeting Lucy, at their first interview after the order of her marriage had gone forth, "you look sad this morning."

"When you hear the cause, dear Mary, you will not wonder."

"Let me hear it immediately then, that I may share it with you or afford you some consolation. Keep me no longer in suspense, I pray you."

"In three weeks' time I am to be married to Lord Dudley, a man you know too well for me to give you any fresh cause of dislike."

"Why, Lucy, dear, I thought you had discarded him a long time ago."

"So I did; but he asked my father and his request was granted; and I suppose there is no appeal from the wishes of a parent."

"If that parent requires nothing unreasonable," added Mary. "When I see parents playing the tyrant over their children, trying to direct the course of love, or forcing them to marry against their will, considering not the misery they may be bringing upon them by such a cause, I can but think they are stretching their parental authority too far, and an awful responsibility will surely be theirs."

"No one can tell from experience the desires of another's heart," said Lucy, sadly. "Experience may aid youth in the affairs of the world, but the cool, calculating experience of age knows not the warm devotion of a fresh young heart, nor the power it has over reason, judgment, and even life itself. Little did I ever dream that I would ever be *compelled* to unite my fortunes with a man twice my age, and one whom I can not love."

Time passed on. The deepest wretchedness in life is a continuance of petty pains, and Lucy found no relief for her sorrows, save in the tender and earnest sympathy of her friend.

"Rouse yourself," dear Lucy, she would say; "you are sadly altered. This will never do. Suppose Mr. Graham should chance to come along, he would not recognize you."

"I shall never see Richard again; no, never," she said, as she covered her face with her hands.

It was evening, and Lucy lay upon her couch, sad and dispirited. Her health was failing under the

terrible tumult of her mind, and the trials she endured. She had been unusually disturbed during the day by her father's demeanor toward her, for her unwillingness to comply with his wishes, and she told him that he was but digging the grave of his child. She lay thus, weary of life, and daring to pray for death, when Mary entered with a long letter in her hand.

"How sadly you look, dear Lucy! Shall I read you some news, dear?" asked Mary; "it will beguile a little of the time."

"If you please, sweet friend."

Mary turned over the leaves of her letter, and began:

"Upon the stormy night of the fourteenth, the black clouds were careering across the leaden sky, and the waves rearing themselves majestically from the mass of waters, then breaking with a deafening roar and blinding shower of foam and spray upon the black rocks of La Hague. A vessel was seen struggling with the adverse winds and battling sea, when the roar of a cannon was heard in the distance, and a bull-dog of Cromwell's was seen on her track, following in her wake. As she rose upon the crest of a wave, the Protector's vessel poured into her a destructive broadside. On board that vessel were two or three fugitives, trying to reach the coast of France. They had chartered this small vessel to carry them over, paying her owner an enormous sum for the service. The vessel, severely injured by the shot, was toiling slowly round a headland, now hidden in a trough, and now soaring high

upon the crest of some giant wave. Her determined enemy, learning by means of spies set for the purpose, her destination, and the freight she bore, were so intent upon watching her, that they had failed to observe a great black hull, running under bare poles, only the stay-sail set, looming up on his starboard beam; and, ere they were aware of the close proximity of this black monster, a line of sheeted flame spouted from her side, a deafening report was heard, splinters were flying in every direction, the man at the wheel was killed, and the water reported rushing with fearful velocity into the after cabin. 'Tis Red Hand, curse him!' said the Captain. 'How is it that he always comes upon us when least expected? The devil is in league with him, that is certain.' Orders were given to repair the breach, and this being done, he looked around in search of his prey, and saw her making her way into the narrow entrance of the port of La Hague. She had escaped him, and he gnashed his teeth with rage—cursing Red Hand and his own ill luck. Determined to have revenge upon the Royalist, who was standing between pursuer and pursued, he gave orders to load the guns to the very muzzle and give him a parting salute. The order was obeyed; deafening the report, and terrible the recoil. It seemed as though the batteries of heaven had been opened. When the smoke cleared away, some commotion was observed upon the deck of the *Avenger*, but, so far as they could see, no damage was done to the ship; but it was afterward learned that several of the crew of the *Avenger* had been wounded, and among them, Second

Lieutenant Richard Graeme, said to be of Scarphoot."

"Richard Graeme, of Scarphoot!" Lucy cried, as she sprung to her feet, her face pale, and her eyes starting from their sockets. "Lost, lost!" she groaned. "Oh, God! this is more than I can bear."

Mary, terrified, sprung to her side.

"Only *wounded*, dear; he is only wounded," she said, soothingly; "besides, how do you know it is *your* Richard? He is not a Lieutenant. Surely you are deceived. Compose yourself, then, I pray you; this terrible excitement will injure you. I have more to read you, but I shall not dare to read more unless you calm yourself."

Lucy took a seat and tried to compose herself; but her nerves were so completely unstrung that she had lost all command of herself.

"There, now, be a good child," said Mary, soothingly, "and I will tell you something. Lord Dudley is dangerously ill, and no hopes are entertained of his recovery. His disease is brain fever. Daily and hourly, bulletins of his health have been sent you; but, for some cause, they have been withheld."

Lucy did not speak, but her hands were clasped over her face, and her bosom heaved tumultuously. At length she said:

"Thank thee, oh! most merciful God, that I hear from *him* once again! An officer on board Red Hand's ship! A friend of the Earl of Sussex! He told me he would be worthy of me; occupy as high a position as I, before he came to claim this hand. He has left his own happy home, and all he holds

dear, for *me*! Worthy of me! Little does he dream that I have been so weak as to allow myself to be betrothed to another. I should grovel upon the earth before him with shame, when I confessed my weakness. I could not meet the frank, honest gaze of those dark eyes. Oh! how I am humbled, debased. But he is noble, generous. He will forgive me, for he knows what I have to contend with. But, what am I talking about? My doom is sealed. He is lost to me forever! But God, in his mercy, grant that this news may be a foretaste of what is in reserve for me. Surely, I have been punished enough."

CHAPTER VI.

SORROW AND BANISHMENT.

LORD DUDLEY was dead. Amid a pomp and display of almost royal magnificence he was committed to the tomb, and the gloomy portals of Westminster closed upon his mortal remains. Lucy and Mary were seated in their own apartment, conversing in a low voice, when a great commotion, a tramping of feet, and running hither and thither, was heard.

"What can that mean? There is a very unusual noise about the house. Stay here, Lucy dear, and I will go and ascertain the cause."

Mary opened the door and stepped out into the broad hall, but seeing no one who could satisfy her curiosity, she descended the great staircase. At the library door stood a group of servants, gazing with apparent horror upon some object within. She went up to them; but, without speaking, they made room for her to pass. Horror seemed to have tied their tongues. When she reached the door and looked into the room, she, too, started back in affright at the terrible spectacle which met her view. There, seated at a table, strewn with papers, scattered about in the greatest confusion, was the Earl of Branden—a bloody razor clutched in his rigid and stiffening fingers, and his throat cut from ear to ear!

What could it mean? Who could have been the cause of the dreadful deed? Who would bear the fearful tidings to the wife and daughter? Mary felt that, though a painful task, she only could communicate it to her friend. She at once dispatched a servant for Dr. Stratford, the family physician, who soon made his appearance, when she hastened to Lucy's room, and, in a few brief words, told her of the great sorrow which was now upon her.

It was discovered, upon examination of the earl's affairs, that he had lost the whole of his once princely fortune, and was little better than a beggar.

"Poor father," sighed Lucy, "he knew the state of his affairs, and my hand was to be the price of means to avert the terrible catastrophe; but, with Lord Dudley's sudden death, the last hope was gone. He had not courage to face poverty manfully, so he has taken his own life to escape the humiliation."

Lady Branden was not one of those persons upon whom affliction takes any very deep hold, and as she was not likely to feel the want of any of her accustomed comforts and luxurious enjoyments, the deep weeds of widowhood were the only signs of her bereavement. Her only brother, a wealthy barrister, offered her a home at his house. Thither she went immediately after the funeral of the late earl, leaving Lucy to be cared for by her friend Mary.

When the young Lord Branden received intelligence of his father's death—learned that the earldom had passed from him—he was furious with rage and mortification. He cared less for the loss of his parent, than for that of the wealth, rank, and position,

which had gone with him. He was buoyed up, however, by his feelings of revenge toward the young man—the fisherman—who had *dared* to win the love of his sister. Such an alliance would, indeed, be the consummation of his family disgrace, and he at once resolved to take his father's place in preventing the "plebeian" loyalist from obtaining his sister's hand. His necessary absence from London, however, kept him from exercising over her the personal surveillance deemed necessary; and he was not long in concluding what steps to take to secure her safe-keeping. Although fighting in the cause of Cromwell, the anti-Popery champion, the young man did not hesitate to use a Roman Catholic institution to effect his purpose. He resolved to place her, by force or subterfuge, if necessary, in a convent, and by giving her up to the Ursulines as their own, to compel her to take the veil. The means he employed were worthy of himself, and were of so brutal a nature, that the poor girl thought any thing preferable to the commission of the terrible threats hissed in her ear. Poor Lucy! she saw it was useless to contend with a spirit capable of such terrible deeds as those he threatened—deeds which he had sworn, with a fearful oath, to commit, if she did not obey, quietly, and without murmuring, his commands. She could only pray to her Heavenly Father to preserve her from a fate, compared to which, she regarded death a blessing.

CHAPTER VII.

A ROYAL GUEST AND A ROYAL RESULT.

ON the day in which Richard prepared to rescue his guest by a voyage across the channel, he learned of the mysterious departure of the Earl of Branden and his family from Scarphoot. That it boded no good to his hopes he painfully realized. That news saddened him greatly, and all things then seemed to go wrong. The day was far too beautiful for the enterprise in hand of running the gauntlet of the channel. Oh, that the heavens had been dark and lowering! It certainly would have been more in unison with his feelings. As far as the eye could reach, every thing floating upon the channel was distinctly visible. Every sail which was spread to the breeze, and every fishing-boat which danced upon its sparkling waters, stood out as if painted on a canvas for all to see; but there was no certain safety for his guest in his present hiding-place. Any moment might reveal his presence in the cottage, and then, no power could save him. The attempt *must* be made.

Woman's wit is proverbial; the nearer the time approached, the more uneasy Richard became. Again he went to his mother, and told her the plan they had agreed upon, he was sure, never would succeed, and he wished to advise with her as to the better

course to pursue. The good lady turned the matter over in her mind long and anxiously, and at length hit upon an expedient which she thought would be the only one likely to succeed, and communicated it to her son, who wondered they had not thought of the plan before.

Dinner being over, Richard went out among the troopers, and was soon talking with them concerning the times and the danger attending any attempt of the Róyalists to escape that way, so securely and vigilantly guarded—an implied compliment to their prowess. He chatted and joked pleasantly and long, though his mind and thoughts, as may be surmised, were upon the rack. Looking toward the house at length, he saw a veiled figure standing in the door.

"There is mother," said he; "I suppose I must attend her on a visit to a sick neighbor. She is chary of going alone, when so many armed men are about," and, going forward to meet her, he whispered, "Does he understand every thing perfectly? Did you tell him to imitate your walk as much as possible?"

"All, my son. Oh, how I tremble! Would to heaven he were safe at his destination."

"Amen!" said Richard, solemnly, and from the depths of his heart. "Well, come, dear mother, the ordeal *must* be passed."

They walked on, and she, naturally a very tall woman, made herself loom up as high as possible, until, coming to the place where the men were standing, leaning upon their muskets, Richard said:

"I suppose, mother, these good men must have

a peep at your face, to convince themselves that you are no Royalist in disguise."

She raised her thick veil and revealed the pale, benign countenance of Madam Graham. Coarse and unfeeling as the Roundheads usually were, they were almost ashamed of an office which subjected such as her to the scrutinizing gaze of a body of armed men. When they had gone a few steps they stopped, and Richard again spoke and said, that his mother had forgotten some cordials she had prepared for the sick person, and would be obliged to return for them, adding:

"I will await you here, mother."

She started back to the cottage. She was gone some time, and Richard was in agonies of fear. At length the veiled figure again appeared, bearing in hands four bottles.

"Mother is coming at last," said he, "and well loaded, too."

Hastening forward and taking some of the bottles, he whispered:

"Stoop a little, and, for the world, do not speak. I will do the talking."

Again coming up to the place where the troopers were still standing, he said:

"Now, mother, I suppose these good men will scarcely be satisfied without another peep at your dear old face."

The figure fumbled at the veil, but the men answered:

"Oh, no, we have done our duty; we have seen the face, and that is enough."

With wildly beating hearts, from which a terrible load was lifted, they pushed on, Richard whispering his companion to take his arm, stoop a little, and walk a little slower. "We must not appear in such a hurry."

They walked on; Richard a little behind to screen his companion from their gaze as much as possible, increasing their speed as they came nearer their destination. Edward was there with the boat. With one very unwomanlike bound, the fugitive Royalist—for it was he—sprung on board, followed by Richard, who arranged the great lion-skin for his guest to sit upon, and they made ready to push off; but scarcely had they raised the steel-pointed poles to shove clear of the rocks, when a succession of shouts rent the air, accompanied by the clatter of horses' hoofs.

"We are lost!" groaned Richard, turning deadly pale; but, upon looking around, his sympathies were never more strongly enlisted. There was a man, running for his life, the blood streaming down his face from the graze of a pistol-ball which had been fired at him, and followed by several mounted troopers at full speed, the foremost of which had just raised a gleaming broad-sword to cut him down, when Richard leveled his pistol and fired. The trooper rolled from the saddle, and the rescued man staggered forward to the rock. Grasping the hand of his preserver, the poor fellow was assisted into the boat.

"This good woman will allow you to sit by her side," said Richard.

"Sussex, my friend!"

"My prince and king!"

These were the words which the young men now heard pass between these two guests. They indeed had a royal load, and a fearful responsibility!

Upon the fall of their leader, the other mounted men turned back for orders; but the sound of approaching numbers was again heard, when two more, half-famished, torn and tattered wretches, came rushing down to the beach, crying:

"For the love of heaven, take us with you!"

"Oxford and Northumberland! Do I indeed see *you* thus?" exclaimed the king, as the fugitives leaped into the boat.

The two nobles knelt and kissed his hand, and uttered their joy at seeing him once again.

Richard now stepped forward in great excitement:

"My liege, and you, my noble lords, I must request you to go below. The place is small and crowded, but I can not answer for your safety here. Come, quickly, I pray you, they are just upon us."

"We obey your commands, noble young man," replied the king; and they immediately followed him below.

"'Tis small and confined, but the best I have to offer," the young fisherman said.

Scarcely had he reached the deck and closed the hatches, when a score of mounted Roundheads dashed down the hill. When they saw their leader lying dead upon the ground, they uttered a yell of rage and dashed forward to seize the boat, with such impetuosity that the foremost of them lost control of his horse, and steed and rider were swallowed

up by the waves, just as Edward had pushed off beyond reach.

“We must place distance between ourselves and these infuriated Roundheads, or our king will yet be wrested from us.”

As soon as they had advanced sufficiently far out into the channel to be safe from any small boats which might attempt pursuit, Richard went down to see now fared his royal guest and his companions. He was received with open arms by all.

“Noble youth!” cried the king, (for it was indeed this royal personage, who had been disguised in his mother’s clothes,) “you have this day performed an act which will live in your country’s history. You have saved your king and three of his dearest friends, who have followed his fortunes, gloomy as they are, and who are to him as brothers. From now henceforth, you take your place among them to receive your reward, if Charles the Second is ever placed upon the throne of his fathers.”

Taking Richard by the hand, Charles presented him as his friend and preserver, to Oxford, Northumberland, and the renowned Red Hand. Each owed him a debt of gratitude which they confessed themselves unable to repay.

“By the way, Sussex,” said the king, “how came you so far from the deck of your staunch vessel, and your life in such jeopardy?”

“I will tell you, my liege,” he answered. “Growing impatient because you did not appear, and fearing that you had fallen into the hands of some of Cromwell’s spies, who are everywhere stationed to

intercept you and your followers, I determined to go to London and discover, if I could, whether or not this was the case, or see if I could learn any tidings of your whereabouts. I was in the audience-chamber of Cromwell himself, and learned from his own lips, that he had received information from his spies, and that you had last been seen near the fishery of Scarphoot. Trusting my disguise, and traveling by night, I reached the hamlet and found it filled with armed Roundheads. I determined to remain and find out, by some means, whether or not you were here, and to assist you to escape or share your fate. I was concealed just above the great rock, near which the boat lay, and saw you coming down the hill attended by our mutual preserver. I knew you, my liege. The disguise was well chosen, but I knew your walk. I could not be deceived. I left my hiding-place, and, just as I reached the top of the hill, those rascally troopers turned the point, saw me, uttered a shout, and dashed on after. They had either discovered your presence at the hamlet and thought they had you, sure, or they recognized me; which, I know not. I started and ran for my life, having to reach the boat before she pushed off; a pistol was fired at me, but fortunately, only grazed my cheek. They were gaining upon me, and one had raised his broad-sword to cut me down, when the opportune shot of my preserver, here, rid me of my pursuer, and I reached the boat, to meet my prince and king. Thank God for this!"

Richard knelt before the king, to signify his devotion to his sovereign.

"Rise, my friend, my preserver," said Charles, "kneel not to me. I am but a poor fugitive wanderer now, without home or shelter, fleeing for my life; but, should I ever be in a position, ask what you will of Charles, and it shall be granted."

The Earl of Sussex, taking the young man by the hand, said:

"Young man, mine is a precarious profession; the deep sea, and my noble ship, is all the home I at present own; but if you will accept a place among other choice spirits on board the *Avenger*, I shall be much gratified."

"Most gladly, my lord," replied Richard, "and I can not sufficiently thank you for your kind consideration."

He now opened a small locker, and taking from it some provisions and wine, left them to regale themselves at leisure, and again mounted to the deck. As he did so, there was an acquaintance of his from "Scarphoot," passing in a boat, who inquired of Edward what luck they had in fishing that day.

"We have had a big haul," was the reply.

"I thought," returned his questioner, with a leer upon his disagreeable features, "I saw some whales aboard not long ago; what the deuce have you done with them?"

Edward was astounded, feeling sure the fellow had seen his passengers. The fellow seemed determined to annoy him, and again asked:

"What are you out in such deep water for? These are not the best fishing-grounds, notwithstanding the big fish you *have* caught; but perhaps you

are bearing dispatches," and again that leer on his face. "Had I not better turn and bear you company, so as to be near to lend my assistance if Red Hand should get at you?"

Richard having heard the fellow's language, went to Edward's rescue:

"We are smuggling liquors," he said, "and, if you will not inform on us, I will give you a bottle of the best wine you ever tasted."

"Agreed," the rascal shouted, throwing up his cap, and as Richard went below for the wine. This was soon produced, and the inquisitive neighbor was soon on his way to the shore. Richard felt now the great necessity for haste, for the rogue, after all, evidently knew that there was something on the smack more contraband than good liquor. To get out of reach of pursuit was the only course to adopt. They trimmed the sail to catch all the breeze, which was very slight, and plied the oars with all their strength. By sundown, "Scarphoot" looked like a dark-blue line against the sky.

Feeling there could be no assurance of safety until they were landed upon the French coast, but wishing to make his royal passenger and his companions as comfortable as possible, Richard went down to see how they were. The air below had become almost stifling, and the propriety of a walk on deck was canvassed. After a careful reconnoiter, Richard permitted his passengers to come out of their close quarters for a breath of fresh air, a treat which they all greatly enjoyed.

Richard, in the mean time, made preparations for

the night's repose. There was his own little bunk, which would suffice for one, but he had three more to lodge somewhere; so, the great lion-skin was spread, and then the watch-coats and blankets belonging to himself and Edward were brought into requisition. He thus supplied his guests with quite comfortable beds.

After sitting an hour or two on deck, and recounting to each other a history of the many trials and difficulties they had endured during their pilgrimage, the fugitives again descended into their little burrow and laid themselves down to rest, wondering what the morrow might bring forth, and whether or not they would reach their destination, trusting themselves, with confidence, to the guardianship of the two youths.

At length, they all sunk to slumber, deep and dreamless. For several preceding nights, neither the king nor his hunted friends had slept, and they were nearly worn out for want of rest. Richard and Edward were vigilant and anxious watchers; no sleep visited their eyelids. A great responsibility, indeed, rested upon them. The safety of England's king was in their hands. What wonder they could not dismiss the most intense anxiety from their minds?

The night seemed almost endless, yet they almost dreaded the dawn; but it came, nevertheless, and the rising sun lit up the waters with a golden radiance. A sail was discovered in the distance, but whether friend or foe, they were as yet unable to tell. Richard went down to communicate the fact

to his passengers, and see how they had rested through the night. Each one had slept the sleep of exhaustion, but they were now awake, and expressed themselves greatly refreshed. The news of the approaching sail was any thing but agreeable to them, but they partook of the refreshments set before them, determined to battle for life and liberty, and to die, rather than, if assailed, yield.

The sail was rapidly approaching, and could now be seen plainly with the naked eye.

"It is the yacht of Lord Branden," said Richard, throwing down the glass, with a gesture of impatience and chagrin. "Is he to follow in my wake on sea and on land? and am I never to be rid of his hated presence? Would that we could escape him this one time! Any other, I would be glad to meet him, and pay him what I owe him with usury." Again he took up the glass. "Ah! he has discovered us!"

It was so, and soon the yacht and the smack were nearing each other fast. Richard could clearly detect the hated form of his enemy. Soon a hail came over the water:

"Fishing-boat, ahoy! Heave to and report!"

Knowing that contention was sure destruction—that his only hope was in the close-quarter conflict, if a conflict should ensue, he put as fair a face upon the matter as possible and obeyed.

"Where are you bound, and what have you on board?" again came over the deep.

"Bound to the French coast for liquors; smuggling is my present errand," was the reply.

"And do you tell me that you have *nothing* on board?"

"I do."

"I claim the privilege of disbelieving you, my fine shell-monger, and shall take the liberty to send a deputation on board to search you."

"I have civilly answered your questions," said Richard, "but not while I have life, will I suffer any search from you. By what authority do *you* pretend to stop vessels of any kind upon the high seas and search them?"

"By the right of my own authority, you insolent, low-bred vagabond," shouted Lord Branden, who at once ordered his men to board the smack and institute a strict search.

Richard and Edward prepared to resist the boarders to the last extremity. They had only pistols and spikes, but with these, and defiance in their eyes, they made themselves quite formidable. The very first man who attempted to board the smack, was the very fellow who had questioned Edward concerning the freight he bore, the day before; but before his feet touched the deck, a ball from Richard's pistol pierced his brain, and thus he paid the penalty of his treachery. Richard afterward learned that he was employed by the commander of the yacht to watch all his motions, and to report to him.

Poor, misguided wretch! He had early received the punishment which his employer richly merited.

Terrible was the fire in Richard's eyes, and terrible the prowess of his arm.

"I have a way of bringing you to terms," at

length Lord Branden shouted, as he ordered a shot from his deck-gun to be fired into the smack. It was instantly discharged, and the ball went whizzing over the smack's deck, doing no harm. There was an unexpected answer. A great black hull was seen looming up to the southward; the deep boom of the cannon came rolling over the still waters. It was the gun of a master who knew how to use his metal, for the shot struck the yacht amidships, as greatly to Richard's surprise, as to the horror and rage of Branden.

At the sound of the altercation upon deck, the king and his companions came rushing up to assist their friends in battling for their preservation. At sight of them, Lord Branden fairly foamed with rage, but he was foiled; Red Hand's ship was approaching.

"Bertrand forever!" shouted Red Hand, taking off his old slouched hat, and waving it over his head. "There is my own staunch ship, my liege. We are saved! Bertrand is the prince of Lieutenants." A second shot, however, from the yacht, struck the smack, knocking a great hole in her side. Lord Branden seemed to care only for the destruction of the smack and all on board, and devoted all his energies to that purpose. A third shot soon followed, which still opened another gaping wound in her side. The water came pouring in with frightful velocity.

"Sink!" shouted Lord Branden, with demoniac glee, "sink with your king and the rest of your precious freight! Red Hand will not avail you now!"

and it seemed impossible that they could keep afloat many minutes, when there came an order:

“Lower away the boats! Fire!”

It was the brave Bertrand, Lieutenant of the *Avenger*. A terrific report followed. When the smoke cleared away, two boats were seen rushing over the water to the rescue. The broadside poured into the yacht made terrific havoc on her decks. One of the small boats then laid in for her, to seize what remained of the crew, while the other dashed away for the fast-sinking smack. Ere the boat reached her side, with a staggering shudder the little craft settled down beneath the waters.

“What, ho!” shouted Bertrand. “Away, for your lives.”

The fugitives and their rescuers had nearly been engulfed; but being all expert swimmers, they sustained themselves upon the water until the *Avenger*’s boat reached them. All were conveyed on board the *Avenger*, amid the rapturous greetings of Sussex’s devoted crew.

The yacht was readily taken by the single boat’s crew. Branden was at once manacled and sent away to the ship. Descending into the cabin, the *Avenger*’s men were greatly surprised at the sight of a lovely girl sitting there, weeping bitterly. Red Hand himself quickly made his appearance on the yacht’s decks, when, being informed of the lady’s presence, he at once sought her, and learned from her faltering lips that she was the sister of Lord Branden; that her father was dead, and Lord Dudley to whom she was to have been married, was also

dead, and that her brother was even then bearing her to France, there to place her in a convent.

"And was it with your own consent, my dear young lady, that you were to enter a convent cloister?" said Red Hand.

"Oh, no, my lord! death would be preferable, were I allowed my choice."

"Why then should Lord Branden wish to place you there?"

"I may tell you, sir, some time," was the answer, as the blood mounted to her cheeks.

"Ah! I see, I see," added the kind-hearted Sussex, with a broad smile over his beaming face. "But come with me on board the *Avenger*. I have some one there to whom I must present you."

"One thing, my dear sir, I would ask of you," said Lucy: "you have my brother in your power. I am no stranger to the bitter enmity he bears you; but spare him, my lord. Oh, spare him for my sake! Though not over kind, he is my brother and all I have."

"We will see, my dear lady," said Sussex. "You are aware that he has occupied a position which, according to the law of nations, is punishable by death. He shall have an impartial trial, and must abide by his sentence. Come now with me, on board my own ship, and I will protect you as a father. I have a dear little girl of my own, about your own age. We will consult regarding your future destination, for I don't mean one so lovely as you are shall be buried in a cloister."

The gallant nobleman assisted her over the side of

the yacht, and entered the boat which was to convey them to the ship, giving directions for the yacht to follow in her wake until further orders.

When he mounted the deck with his fair young charge, many were the furtive glances cast upon her by the young officers; but Sussex drew her hastily into his own private cabin, and installed her sole mistress. He then at once visited the young Lord Branden, whom he found in close quarters, chafing at restraint, and cursing in his inmost heart, the chance which had brought him into the power of his bitterest enemy. Branden knew full well that he deserved no consideration at his captor's hands; he hated Sussex, with all the diabolical intensity of a fiend.

When the chief entered his captive's presence, the young man's eyes emitted all the fiery venom of an enraged serpent, as he said: "You have me at last in your power. Do your worst; I scorn you, spit upon you, vile tool of a viler tyrant."

"Hold!" cried Red Hand, "I seek no revenge. Justice will suffice. You will be tried by the laws of your country, and your punishment will be in conformity with your guilt. I leave you to your own reflections, which, doubtless, will be more agreeable than my society," and Red Hand left him alone.

Sussex then sought for Richard, and with hearty pleasure, offered him for the present the post of second officer, a position which the young man accepted with many misgivings, receiving the congratulations of the king and the cheers of the crew, who had all learned of his devotion and daring. Lucy

heard the cheers, but little surmised for whom they were uttered. So Richard Graham was installed in the office made vacant by the wounding, some weeks before, of Lieutenant Richard Graeme, of Scarphoot, the story of whose wound, as recited in the newsletter, so frightened Lucy when it was read to her by her friend Mary. The old adage, "Out of the sorrows of one come the joys of another," was thus verified.

Edward Gregory would accept of no place. He wished to return to the hamlet. His highest ambition called him to the side of Mabel, whose smile was the dearest reward he claimed. His own little vessel was beneath the waters of the channel, sent by the same hand which had destroyed Richard's, to keep her company; but in her place, Sussex presented to him Lord Branden's yacht, a very fine craft, splendidly furnished: "But," said the donor, "I trust you may not employ her in her old occupation of channel spy!"

"No fear, my lord," said Edward; "but surely she is much too grand to take in place of mine."

"No, no!" hastily rejoined the Captain, "I would she were twice her value, and then she would fall far short of being sufficient recompense for what you have done. In addition to her, I must request your acceptance of these five thousand pounds, to set you up in housekeeping."

Edward's face crimsoned with excitement; his honor revolted at receiving such pay for his services. The yacht was more than ten times the value of his own vessel. "You wish," said he, "to deprive me

of the pleasure of thinking that I performed a service for you, my lord."

"Nay, young man," returned the nobleman, "I would only wish to reward merit for a noble action. You ventured your life to save us. You must accept of all I offer, or I shall think you regret what you have done."

"Regret it my lord? Heaven knows it was the proudest moment of my life."

"I wish you to stay until after the trial of Lord Branden. We may wish you to take some passengers on your return," said Sussex.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE AVENGER'S GREAT LOSS.

CROMWELL, during this period, though still the idol of the army, was slowly losing caste, notwithstanding his unexampled success, and the almost royal authority he wielded; he yet was not immortal, and was called to report to a higher tribunal than his own. His son Richard succeeded him, as quietly as any other king was succeeded by a prince of Wales.

During the five months of Richard Cromwell's administration, every thing went on so tranquilly and so regularly, that all Europe believed him to be firmly seated upon the chair of state. In some respects his situation was more advantageous than that of his father. The young man had made no enemy, and his hands were unstained with blood. His humanity, ingenuousness, the mediocrity of his abilities, and the docility with which he submitted to the guidance of others, admirably qualified him to please all parties. For a time, it seemed highly probable that he would, under the direction of advisers, effect what his father had attempted in vain. The whole nation were now sick of government by the sword, and pined for government by the law.

At this time, a coalition was formed between the military malcontents and the republican minority of

the House of Commons. It may well be doubted whether Richard Cromwell could have triumphed over that coalition, even had he inherited his father's clear judgment and iron courage. It is certain that simplicity and weakness, such as his is represented to have been, were not the qualities which the conjuncture required. He fell ingloriously and without a struggle.

After a thousand changes, accompanied with much popular discontent, and failing to get a leader suitable to the exigencies of the times, Charles II was called to the throne.

The young Lord Branden, to resume the direct thread of our story, was tried by court-martial, convened on board the *Avenge*r, and was sentenced to be hanged at the yard-arm; but the Earl of Sussex commuted the sentence to the same punishment which he himself had suffered, viz: to have his right hand severed at the wrist. White and livid as death, the young lord turned when he heard his sentence. Neither raving nor curses availed to mitigate his fate. He prayed to be hanged or shot instead of mutilation, but Sussex was not to be moved; as the enemies of the king had served him, so would he now serve one of the most implacable and vicious of them. The terrible state of his mind brought on a fever which threatened his life. During his illness he received every care. Lucy and Richard were indefatigable in their attentions, and all on board vied with each other in waiting upon and ministering to his wants. 'Tis needless to say how grateful was his

sister for the kindness lavished upon him by Richard, whom he had used so terribly ill. Even when she bent over the nearly insensible form of her brother, she could not feel entirely wretched, for even then the lustrous eyes of her lover beamed upon her. She could have knelt and clasped his knees in gratitude; but all the care lavished upon the young nobleman by one whom he had so basely treated, elicited no show of gratitude from his fierce heart. But Lucy's gratitude more than repaid all the impatient insults of her brother's lips. A strong constitution, added to unremitting care, soon triumphed over disease, and he recovered rapidly, but illness had effected no change. His was the same terrible nature.

In the mean time, though justice slept, still the commander had not forgotten, and one day he was brought upon deck to receive the punishment he so richly merited. Lucy plead long and hard for her misguided brother, but Red Hand was firm. He told her that his disposition was so terribly vindictive that, unless he received some check in his lawless career, it was impossible to tell what he might do, or how dreadful might be his end.

"This punishment may have a salutary effect on him, my dear girl," said Sussex. "I feel deeply for you, but I must do my duty."

She wept bitterly over her brother's fate, yet could but confess it was deserved.

The preparations were speedily made; the basket in which the severed hand was to drop was ready, and dreadful were the imprecations which issued from his lips. He struggled fiercely; bit and spat

upon those who were holding him; but the handkerchief was dropped, the blow was given, and the severed hand fell into the basket prepared for it. The victim fainted, but was soon restored, and the stump was dressed, the bandages were applied, and a composing draught given, and he was carried to his cabin to think over, in silence and solitude, the deeds of his short and guilty life.

During her stay on board, Lucy and Richard were much together; both the king and the earl regarded them with paternal pride, and rejoiced in their good fortune. But Richard's duties on board were arduous; he had not much leisure for love-making, and, in her promenades at evening, she was usually attended by the king or Red Hand, who vied with each other in care and attention to her. As to her future destination, the earl had talked the matter over with her, and it was arranged that she should go to the place at which he had placed his daughter, a safe and quiet spot in the little town of Cherbourg, in France, whither he had taken his child when he assumed command of the *Avenger*. Confident that, in Lucy Branden, he was introducing to the intimate companionship of his daughter, a model of purity and amiability, he was delighted with this acquisition to her society, while Lucy was much pleased to have one of her own age for a companion—one whom she hoped to love, as well for herself, as in gratitude to her father for his kind care and paternal consideration. Neither was she blind to his appreciation of Richard, for which she honored him even more than for all he had done for herself.

The young Lord Branden soon recovered, and resolved that when he should leave the ship Lucy should go with him, but this the earl peremptorily forbade.

"No!" said he. "*I* have assumed the guardianship of your sister, conjointly with the king, and I think we can take care of her until we place her in better hands—those of a husband."

Richard stood by, and received a glance from the earl which caused his heart to throb with delight, but the look of scorn and hatred which he received from the Lord Branden, was one that would make a stouter heart even than his to quail.

Edward, now that his presence no longer was requisite, wished to return to the hamlet. His highest ambition called him there. A handsome present was sent to Mrs. Graham by Red Hand, and another by the king, as an earnest of something more substantial, if he should ever be in a position to offer it. They all bade the young man adieu, with heartfelt thanks for the part he had taken in their escape, with an assurance from each of a lasting friendship, and bade him come freely to them if he thought of any place or remuneration in their power to confer. Richard, the friend of his childhood and youth, he clasped in a warm embrace, and stepping on board the yacht, so lately their terrible foe, but now his own, was soon glancing over the sparkling waters in the direction of his home.

It had been determined that the yacht should bear the Lord Branden to his old home upon the cliff, which had not yet passed into other hands, but he protested

that he would never set foot upon her again. He demanded to be taken to one of Cromwell's ships. But how was this to be accomplished? No one would venture into the very jaws of the foe for the sake of gratifying him, and he was unable to row himself because he had but one hand. What was to be done in an emergency like that? Richard volunteered, as a last act of kindness to his bitterest foe and of devotion to the woman he loved. Sussex remonstrated, the king actually forbade him placing his life and person in such peril just to gratify a request which Branden really had no right to prefer. In spite of the remonstrances of his good friends and their predictions of his certain seizure, Richard lowered a boat, assisted his enemy to enter, and pushed off toward the north side of the channel, where it was expected some of Cromwell's war-ships lay.

Several leagues were passed in the tedious voyage, night was coming on, and they were yet some distance from a large ship, seen lying at anchor off Beachy-head, on the coast of Sussex. The gleam of her lanterns shone in a long line of light over the dark waters, guiding him to his destination. During all the time of the passage, not one word had either of these men uttered to each other. Richard plied the oars with all his might, and the Lord Branden sat, eyeing him with lowering brows, which never lifted until they began to near the ship; then a scarcely-suppressed smile of gratified revenge lit up his face. Richard saw this, and it clearly opened his eyes to his danger. He had indeed been foolhardy. When he arrived within two or three boat's lengths

he was hailed. Lord Branden answered the hail, and when they drew along side, Richard asked the assistance of one of the sailors to help Lord Branden aboard, while he himself was trying to steady the boat, which was rocking fearfully in the agitated waters. Several men descended to the small boat to assist in the removal of the helpless man. These men remained in the boat a moment after Branden ascended, so that Richard could not shove off. Quickly the order was passed over the ship's bulwarks: "Seize that man!" an order executed with unwonted alacrity, and the young officer soon followed his late guest to the deck. There he was confronted only by one of the officers of the deck, who commanded him to be manacled and then to be conveyed below.

"Why is this outrage perpetrated upon me?" he asked of the officer.

"You are one of Red Hand's minions," said the man, "and you must answer for the deeds committed by your terrible commander."

"Infamous treachery!" Richard cried, as his eyes fairly blazed with the fire of his anger. "I bought that prisoner here as a civilian—am I, for *that* act, to be treated as a criminal? If so, you are in honor bound to return Branden to Sussex's hands."

The officer did not resent this language, but, on the contrary, seemed to take no pleasure in the part he was performing. Richard *felt* that he was a friend, and was reassured when, on going below, the officer bade him to be of good cheer, promising to visit him again soon. He then left Richard alone, in

darkness, and ascended to the deck. Upon every side, officers and men were heaping denunciations upon the head of Red Hand. He joined in the denunciations of the commander of the *Avenger* and her vile crew, and thus seemed to belie the hopes of the poor prisoner who had deemed the man his friend.

Days passed and Richard did not return. Gloomy were the forebodings of his friends on board the *Avenger*.

"Foolish boy," said the king, "why need he have ventured upon this hazardous errand?"

"I fear he is done for," said Sussex. "He will certainly be sacrificed, I fear, for there is not one drop of honorable blood in the veins of men who would, under the circumstances, take him prisoner."

Bertrand, first officer of the *Avenger*, a noble young fellow as ever trod a deck, said: "My lord, Richard Graham must be found. If a prisoner, he must be released."

"You but echo the wishes of all our hearts, Lieutenant," said the king, "but it is not such an easy matter. That they have taken him, is now pretty sure, and that he will be vigilantly guarded, is as sure. Sleepless eyes will watch him, and the dagger will drink his blood at the first moment of his attempted rescue."

"We can employ stratagem, my lord," said Bertrand, addressing his commander. "'Tis not the first time we have outwitted them."

"I would not a moment hesitate," replied Sussex, "but we have our king aboard and must not run the

risk of losing him, which, if we should become engaged with two or three of Cromwell's ships at once, would be likely. They are usually lying so near each other that they can signal for assistance, if any one is in trouble."

"I will go with a boat's crew, armed, and release him, or die in the attempt."

"Bertrand, I honor you for your zeal; but should you go, you know not what vessel holds him captive."

"True, my lord, I had not thought of that," said Bertrand, musingly; "but I can not rest, and think the poor fellow is languishing in chains."

"It is cruel, indeed," said the earl; "we will try and contrive some way to save him."

Tea was over in the cabin, and it being hot and sultry, all had come upon deck to enjoy the trifling breeze which came from the northward. The sun was sinking to rest behind a bank of clouds which gave evidence of an approaching summer night's storm. Every countenance wore a sad and thoughtful expression. The fate of Richard weighed heavily at every heart. The sun finally passed away; the heavens became overcast; the lightning gleamed through the lurid depths, and the deep-toned thunder muttered in the distance. The darkness every moment increased, and the shore of France hove in sight, but the wind soon became the hurricane, before which the *Avenger* flew like a frightened bird, heading down the channel toward La Hague. Every moment the storm seemed to increase in its fury. Under the small storm-jib, the ship flew before the gale.

Sussex felt confident of weathering it out in safety, and went below to comfort the king and Lucy, who were seated in her little cabin talking of the storm, and at intervals, of the prospect of Richard's release.

"How is she getting along?" said the king, as Sussex closed the companion-way and stepped into the cabin.

"Well—very well, my liege."

"It is a terrible storm," continued the king. "Do you think you will out-weather it?"

"No fears, my king; but I must own, I have seldom been caught in so terrific a blow."

"Do you deem it safe, my lord, to make the coast in a hurricane like this?"

"Perfectly, my liege; a ship like this is not easily driven into stress nor on to the beach. The La Hague light is in sight, and we shall make the harbor within the next hour."

He turned to go on deck again, when, as his hand touched the companion-slide, a thundering crash was heard, and a shout from the pilot: "Bear a hand there! lively lads! bring an ax!"

The earl sprung upon deck, and found that the storm-jib-stay had parted, and the sail lay floundering over the side. The ship lay in a trough, through the momentary indiscretion of the helmsman, and the chances for the moment looked rather frightful. Sussex had, in his hurry to reach the deck, neglected to close the hatchway, and the water dashed into the cabin. The king and Lucy, in great alarm, rushed wildly out, supposing the ship had struck or was

foundering. To add to the terror of the moment, the pilot discovered that they were close in upon a lee-shore, and, although they appeared still to be in deep water, at a short distance off, the "combers" were plainly visible, as they rolled in and dashed along the beach beyond.

The remnants of the tattered jib were cut away as quickly as possible, and the hurried order given to run up the main-jib.

"We must try it," said the earl, "the wind favors us somewhat, and we may claw off."

"You can not do it, my lord; it is certain death," said the pilot, addressing the commander.

"The alternative is certain death," quietly added the earl; "we must either go to pieces in fifteen minutes or claw off. Up with it, my lads."

The jib was raised with difficulty, the helm put up, and the ship's head came slowly round to the wind. As she hove off, a sea struck her violently amidships, and Lucy Branden, losing her hold, went over the side.

"My daughter!" cried Sussex, madly springing toward the bulwarks. "A boat! a buoy!" he shouted, and before any one was aware of his purpose, he was overboard in the wild whirl of waters at her side, sustaining her. He seized Lucy in his left hand, and with the right arm, from which the hand was gone, he battled with the hissing seas. He was an expert swimmer, and found the task not impossible. They were a long distance from shore, and the waves were rolling with fearful violence.

The buoys were quickly dashed over the side, and

had not Bertrand seized the king and forcibly held him back, he too would have plunged into the roaring abyss in his terrible excitement. The pilot, Lieutenant, and all on board, felt that their brave and devoted chief had gone to his death, for what could they do to save him? There seemed but one course left. The ship had already fallen away from the spot where the accident happened, and the pilot, much as he desired to leave no means untried to save them, deemed it a fruitless and perilous task to remain there a moment longer, if he could claw off, as *Sussex* had ordered. The buoys, and a dozen large planks had been thrown over, at the instant he leaped into the water; but the sea ran so high, and with his one hand he must support Lucy, how was he to grasp a buoy or a plank with his remaining stump?

The crew now heard the hissing and roaring of the breakers, and turned to the only means of saving themselves. The winds howled and whistled a mournful requiem; the boiling waves lashed the bleak and naked rocks, and broke with a terrible roar upon the beach beyond; the pitchy darkness hung like a funeral pall over the gloomy scene. The king and Bertrand were in the deepest distress. They thought not of their own peril, which was still terribly threatening, and realized nothing but the dreadful event which had taken place so unexpectedly.

After three hours' unremitting labor, backing and filling, tacking and running, they again made the light of La Hague, and anchored in safety off the harbor of Cherbourg. The next morning, by dawn,

a courier was sent down the coast for ten leagues of land, to inquire if any drowned or rescued persons had been seen or heard from in any way.

As quickly as possible, the storm having abated, the ship was repaired and again put out, and running down to the place where the accident happened, as near as they could judge. During the whole day, the most active and diligent search was made upon land and upon the beach, but all to no purpose. The search was continued faithfully, under the direction of the king and Bertrand for a whole week, and they received daily reports from their agents, also employed in the search. But all was vain and fruitless. On such a night, and in such a fearful storm, they must have perished. Even before the eyes of the king and Bertrand, Lucy had gone down, and though the earl had seized her the next moment, and held her above the foaming surges, it was but a moment. The ship receded, the wind and waves bore the hapless beings further and further from their frenzied gaze—out into darkness and to miserable death.

CHAPTER IX.

A DOUBLE RESCUE.

RICHARD'S jailer, according to promise, visited him often, and mitigated all in his power the rigor of his confinement. He confided to his prisoner the fact of his own compulsory taking of office on board the *Culloden*, about two months previously, and that he had been anxiously awaiting an opportunity to escape. "I pretend," said he, "to be as good a Cromwellite as any of them, and never defend the king nor his followers, but it is only that I may allay all suspicion and keep their lynx-eyes off me. You don't know how closely every one on board is watched. They have suspicions that the sailors are not quite so loyal to Cromwell as they might be. They allow me the charge of you, because there are none who can be more safely trusted. Now for some news. It is decided among the officers to visit you this evening, to see and question you in regard to the king. They have heard from this rascal, with the one hand, who betrayed you, that Charles is with Red Hand on the *Avenger*. Tell every thing just as it is, for they can do him no harm, and if you prevaricate, and they find that you do, it will only be the worse for yourself. I must load you with chains for a little while, that they may think I am

not lenient toward you. After they are gone, I will again free your limbs."

Accordingly, the prisoner was stretched upon a piece of canvas and loaded with chains. An hour passed, during which his reflections were any thing but agreeable. Then he heard voices approaching, and among them, he was sure, was that of Lord Branden. "He is coming," he thought, "to gloat over me in my misery. The coward! he thinks he has me at advantage now." Three men entered. The lamp they carried only made more visible the dungeon-like gloom of the place.

"Phew! how you smell down here," said Lord Branden; "a fitting place you have chosen for this dainty spark. I wish you had his whole ship's crew in the same quarters."

"Yes," was answered by the commander of the *Culloden*, "it would be the best thing that ever happened us. Red Hand is a terror to the whole navy. They have a superstition among the sailors that he is in league with the devil, and that there is no use in fighting him, for defeat is certain. Well, my brave fellow," said the Captain, addressing Richard, "how do you like your parlor?"

A groan was Richard's only answer.

"The low-bred vagabond," muttered Lord Branden, "it is just what he deserves. I only wish his commander was here to bear him company."

"You do well to say this *now*," replied Richard, "when it is out of my power to resent your insults and also your infamous treachery toward me."

The two companions of Branden looked at him in surprise, but asked no questions.

"I hear your king is on board the *Avenger*," said the Captain. "How in the fiend's name did he escape all the guards and spies set to watch him and prevent his escape?"

"I assisted him," said Richard, fearlessly.

"Yes, and saved Red Hand and two more of the tyrant's myrmidons," added Branden, "for which service he ought to swing, and would, if I had my way."

"You have been in a bad business, young man," said the Captain. "Had the cause been a better one in which you have embarked your fortunes, you might, one of these days, have attained a post of honor. Cromwell rewards handsomely all who serve him."

"All the reward I ask, is the approval of my king and my conscience," replied Richard. "Having their approval, I crave no honors at the hand of a regicide and usurper."

"You are rather bold of speech," angrily spoke the Captain, "for one in your situation."

"I thought, sir, that you, and all followers of Cromwell, were for freedom of thought and speech? You call the king a 'tyrant,' we call Cromwell a 'usurper.'"

This severe application of Puritan logic was too much for the Captain. Rising, he said: "We will leave you to your reflections, which are doubtless more agreeable to you than to your hearers;" and Richard was left alone.

"Well, Mumford," said the Captain, when he reached the deck, "you have made sure that your prisoner shall not escape. How many pounds of iron do you suppose he has on him?"

"The saucy dog," said Mumford, "I will keep iron upon him until he repents of his sins, or bids us adieu for a better service in another world."

"By my faith, but you are a staunch Roundhead; I must report you for promotion," added the Captain, approvingly.

"Much obliged to you, sir; but I am satisfied with my present office. I can here serve my country better than if I were elsewhere."

The second officer smiled with a visible sensation of satisfaction, but the Captain was unable to interpret it. Mumford was, thereafter, implicitly trusted, and used his exclusive charge of Richard to ameliorate the young man's unpleasant position.

"How good you are," said Richard. "How can I repay you for your kindness to me here?"

"By saying nothing now," was the reply, "and leaving all to me."

"That I will; but can you see any prospect of a release from this scrape—some hope for me?"

"Not much of a prospect at present," replied his jailer, "but we must keep a good look-out, and take advantage of every favorable circumstance. I must be wary and watchful. This fellow you risked your life and liberty to bring to this ship, is a very bitter enemy. He is plotting for your destruction and may succeed. We must be prepared to outwit them. Be of good heart. I will keep you apprised of all

that is going on." Richard felt that he had a friend, and was greatly comforted.

It was the afternoon preceding the evening upon which Sussex and Lucy Branden were lost, that Mumford sought his prisoner. "They are going to take you to the Tower of London," said he; "we must escape from the ship this night, or perish in the attempt."

Richard's cheek blanched at the terrible name of the Tower. Few who entered the portal of that most terrible stronghold, ever came forth again but for burial. He thought of Lucy, the fair being, whose gentle heart he felt was throbbing in anguish for his absence; he pondered over his singular and unexpected meeting with the king and the Earl of Sussex; he dwelt upon his short sojourn upon the noble ship, and the friendship professed for him by his sovereign and the earl; he looked with pride upon the high and honorable post he held on board the *Avenger*. Was all to be so short-lived, and his doom to be to linger in chains the remainder of his life, or to die an ignominious death upon the scaffold? He could only express the dreadful agony of the hour by his groans and irrepressible tears.

The evening set in dark and gloomy; fitful gusts of wind came and went. Streaks of jagged lightning shot athwart the heavens; the thunder rolled over the arching sky. The sailors had partaken their evening rations, and preparations were making for the coming storm.

"We are likely to have a greasy night of it, Norton," said the Captain of the *Culloden*, addressing

his first officer; "make all fast; haul out a league or so from land and cast anchor. Call me if necessary; I am going below."

"Ay, ay, sir!" was the seamanlike response. "Haul out from the land it is. Lively, my lads; strip her to the bare poles! The storm will soon be upon us, but all you will have to do will be to watch that she does not foul her anchor."

The sailors were soon busy at their appointed posts, until all orders were executed. Then the evening watch was set, and those whose off turn it was prepared to turn in. Mumford held the first watch. Before stationing himself at his post he went below, freeing Richard of all his fastenings. He then gave him a great watch-coat, to pull over his royal uniform; then placed in his hands the end of a rope which he had run in from above, ordering that when he pulled the cord, the prisoner was to come boldly up the hatchway; "for," said he, "this night we must make the attempt to escape. To-morrow will see you an inmate of the 'Tower,' if you remain. The night will be of an Egyptian darkness, and there is an appearance of a terrible storm, but we must brave it; it is the only hope I have of saving you. Better a damp grave in the deep, than the Tower dungeons!"

Richard warmly grasped the hand of his friend, and signified his readiness for the emergency. Mumford returned to the deck and assumed his watch.

The wind was now blowing a perfect hurricane. The ship rose and fell upon the fast-rising swells,

but her anchors held her fast. Nearly all on board had gone to their respective places of repose, and Mumford and two midshipmen were all who were now on the after deck. The storm continued to increase in fury, and the precious moments were passing away. The two midshipmen crept under a pile of sails to shelter themselves from the wind. Mumford paced back and forth, and at last he pulled the cord. Immediately Richard appeared on the deck. Mumford at once motioned him aft, and finding all clear, he soon followed. They proceeded to the davits, where swung the Captain's small launch. This was noiselessly lowered into the mad waters which threatened to engulf it every moment, but it rode bravely, and running down by the pulleys, the men were soon safely in their seats, then they cut adrift, and were soon far astern of the ship. Not daring to approach the land if it could be avoided, and being good boatmen, they pulled on in the direction of the spot where Richard had left the *Avenger*. The wind favored their progress, and they were driven forward at a rapid rate. Such was the force of the wind, that it sometimes seemed their very coats would be blown off, but they kept their little craft steady, and passed on in safety during the darkness. Finally, the clouds began to clear away and it grew lighter.

"Surely I see something which looks like a boat off there with two persons in it. Look, Graham, off to the south'ard."

Richard gazed off in the direction indicated.

"You are right, my good friend, but it is not a

boat; it is, I think, two persons seated upon a plank or spar." He continued his scrutiny. "If I am not greatly mistaken, one of them is a woman!"

Mumford, too, was now intently scanning the object. "Sure as guns!" he exclaimed. "If that is not a petticoat, then John Mumford never had a mother. Let us pull for our lives. The wind has fallen considerably. Hold up something, Graham, to let them know help is near."

They had nothing white about them, so they pulled with tremendous strokes. Soon they neared the float, when Mumford shouted: "Keep up good courage, help is near!" The backs of the poor wrecked creatures were toward them, but the head of the man turned quickly at sound of the shout. The boat ranged near, and Richard, with a gasp of astonishment, beheld Red Hand and Lucy.

"My lord!" he cried, "what means this?" and he took the insensible form of Lucy from the arms of the earl, and clasped her to his bosom. Mumford assisted the earl into the boat, who was now so benumbed as to be almost helpless. The sailor quickly produced from his great-coat pocket a bottle of brandy, some of which the earl swallowed eagerly. He revived at once, when the deliverers directed their efforts to Lucy's resuscitation. After a half-hour of anxious suspense, she showed signs of returning consciousness. To the reviving influence of the brandy, was added the magic of a beloved voice, calling her in a lover's pleading accents back to life. When she opened her eyes and saw upon whose bosom she reposed, and whose arms encircled her

form, a smile lit up her pale features, and a faint blush returned to her white cheek.

"Am I in heaven," she said, "and did you reach that blessed abode before me?"

"Neither, my darling. We are both yet inhabitants of this beautiful but sinful world, and have both escaped a terrible death."

The earl, who had now so far recovered as to be able to sit up, explained the circumstances of their case, when Richard in turn revealed the facts of his escape. Sussex grasped the arm of Mumford, adding: "I am most proud to know you."

That was John Mumford's moment of happiness.

They were now in sight of "Scarphoot." At the old moorings of his own little smack he saw, riding at anchor, the yacht presented by the earl to his friend Edward. Not deeming it safe to approach too near the shore, Richard signaled to Edward, as he had done in days of yore, for him to come out with his vessel. This signal was quickly seen by the watchful fellow, and the yacht soon received on board the most happy voyageurs. Edward was quickly in possession of the story of all, and had the heartfelt satisfaction of placing his services at the earl's disposal. Ere long, the yacht's sails filled away in quest of the *Avenger*.

The yacht was a rapid sailer, but it had to cruise round several days unsuccessfully in search of the ship. At length, upon the fourth morning, just at dawn, she hove in sight. A mutual recognition took place, and they made for each other as rapidly as possible. The king and Bertrand stood upon the

deck, with each a glass, gazing at their old enemy as she rapidly approached, with their three missing friends standing upon the deck. Cheer upon cheer—shout upon shout—went up from the *Avenger's* deck, and when the two vessels met, and the reunited friends were clasped in their arms, tears of joy rained down their cheeks; all felt repaid for their sufferings. Sussex had told Richard of the generous determination of Ertrand to seek him, and it was with warmest greetings that the two young men again met. Richard presented his friend Mumford to the king. He knelt at the feet of Charles and was given his sovereign's heartfelt congratulations. Sussex gave him a place on board of the *Avenger*, until there was some other opening with which to reward him. He soon proved to be a most valuable auxiliary to the ship's crew.

They now sailed for "La Hague," and entering the harbor of Cherbourg, the earl prepared at once for a visit on shore. Arranging for the comfort of the king and his friends, Sussex started with Lucy for the residence of his daughter.

Lucy was struck with surprise at beholding the affection manifested between father and daughter. Carrie, as the earl's child was named, fell upon her father's neck, kissed him again and again, patted his face, smoothed his hair, and then nestled in his bosom. She was too overjoyed even for speech, and it was some minutes ere the parent broke the thrilling silence to introduce his friends. Carrie took Lucy to her arms and loved her at once.

Remaining with the girls for a short time, and

seeing that they were supplied with every thing which could conduce to their comfort and enjoyment, he returned to the ship, and then prepared to land Charles and his suite. Great numbers of the Royalists who had escaped from England were gathered at the port, and hailed with great joy the advent of their sovereign. His arrival on shore was the occasion of many affecting scenes. Tears of joy and gratitude coursed down his cheeks, as he listened to their expressions of loyalty, and their determination to stand by him in prosperity and adversity, honor or dishonor, life or death.

CHAPTER X

THE MONARCH AT HOME.

When the people concluded to recall Charles II to the throne, they assumed that he would take warning by his father's fate; but even had he been distrusted, the dangers which threatened the country were such, that in order to avert them, some compromise might well be made, some risk run. Any thing was preferable to a succession of incapable rulers or a factious Parliament incapable of rule. With Cromwell's death passed away the people's confidence in the new state, and the result of the elections succeeding, was such as might have been expected from the temper of the nation. The House of Commons consisted at that time, with but few exceptions, of persons friendly to the royal family. But the military were in a gloomy and a savage mood. They hated the name of *king*, and they detested the name of *Stuart*. They saw that the close of their long rule was approaching, and a life of inglorious toil before them. They attributed all their ill-fortune to the weakness of their leaders and the treachery of some of their partisans. Discontented, and left without a chief, they were still to be dreaded. It was no light thing to face an army of fifty thousand fighting men whose backs had never been turned upon the foe.

Every means, therefore, was employed by the friends of Charles to soothe and divide the discontented warriors. At the same time preparations were made for a conflict. Wealthy Royalists grudged nothing to a red-coat, and were so liberal with their best wine, that the warlike saints were often in a condition not very honorable either to their religious or military character. By the Provincial Government the militia were organized. Trained bands were held in readiness to march. Citizens were armed and accoutered and passed in review. The navy was heartily with the nation, and it was hoped that England would at last be delivered, though not without a bloody struggle; but happily the danger of a struggle was averted. Those opposed to the restoration found themselves too much in the minority to venture.

But there was one moment of extreme peril. Lambert, one of the most determined of the anti-Royalists, escaped from prison, called his old comrades to arms, and headed the insurgents, and the flame of civil war was again enkindled; by the greatest exertion it was trodden out before it had time to spread; and the luckless imitator of Cromwell was again in confinement. This so dampened the spirits of the soldiers that they sullenly resigned themselves to their fate. The banished and outlawed lords returned to their homes, and again entered the halls of Parliament, from which they had been driven ten years before. Charles II was invited to return to his country, and was proclaimed, with a pomp never before witnessed. The magnificent war-vessel of Sussex, draped with flags, conveyed him and his

suite from Germany to the shores of Kent, with a gallant fleet in attendance. When he landed, the cliffs of Dover were covered by thousands of spectators, crazed with delight. His journey to London was one continued scene of triumph. Flags were flying, bells and music sounding, wine and ale flowing to the health of their beloved and long-banished sovereign, whose return brought peace, law, and freedom.

But amid all this joy there lowered one spot, dark and threatening. The army was drawn up to welcome their sovereign. He bowed, smiled, and extended his hand; but all his courtesy was in vain. The countenances of the soldiers were dark and threatening, and, had they dared to give way to their feelings, this bright and happy pageant would have closed in blood. Discord and defection had left them no faith in their leaders. The whole of London was under arms. Companies of militia were assembled from various parts of the realm, under the command of loyal noblemen, to welcome that king whose fortunes they had followed through those dark and troublous times, when his father was executed upon the block, and his son made a homeless wanderer, fleeing for his life from his own rightful kingdom. The glorious day closed in peace, and the restored monarch safely reposed in the palace of his ancestors.

Charles II, as we have said, learned in his adversity to fathom the depths of the human mind, and learned to despise human nature, we are told. It is creditable to his temper that, ill as he thought of his species, still he was not a misanthrope. He was so far humane that it was highly disagreeable to him to

witness suffering or listen to complaint. He always tried to relieve the one, and redress the other.

The facility of Charles was such as has not since been found in a man of equal sense. He was a slave without being a dupe. Worthless persons, to the very bottom of whose hearts he saw, and whom he knew to be unworthy his confidence, could wheedle him out of places, titles, domains, state secrets, and pardons. He bestowed much, but never acquired the fame of beneficence. He never gave spontaneously, but it grieved him to refuse. We say he never gave spontaneously; this must be qualified; his friends in adversity, he never forgot. Charles, notwithstanding all his foibles, possessed a grateful heart, and nothing was too great or too good to lavish upon those who had served him in his banishment. To Richard Graham he presented the earldom of Essex, then vacant, with all its immense estates, and the power to bequeath it to his posterity. To Richard's mother, £5,000 a year, during her life, and £10,000 to Edward Gregory.

When the king was firmly seated upon his throne, quiet restored, and law reigned once more, a court, the gayest and most voluptuous ever held by monarch, was instated. The Earl of Sussex sent Bertrand, as Lord High Admiral, and Richard, Earl of Essex, on board his own splendid war-ship, the *Avenge*, commanded by Captain John Mumford, for his daughter and Lucy Branden, and installed them joint mistresses in his own magnificent palace in London. To say they were the brightest stars at Charles' court, would convey but a slight idea of their

peerless charms. Richard, the young Earl of Essex, shone conspicuous among the nobles. His fine countenance beamed with true nobility of soul; at his approach, fair cheeks flushed, bright eyes flashed, and hearts fluttered. Affable and courteous to all, his glance ever sought the one sweet image of his heart's shrine—Lucy, of Scarphoot.

It was an evening such as England only can boast. The Venetian windows were thrown open to admit the air. The lamps burned softly in the drawing-room of the Earl of Sussex. A balmy air from the garden swept through the lattice and gently waved the crimson tapestry upon the walls, breathed on the gorgeous pictures, kissed the cold statues, and wandered away through the long halls and spacious rooms of the mansion, until it fanned the cheeks of the mistress of beauty—the queen of Richard's soul—before whom the soft winds found him kneeling.

“Dost remember, dear Lucy, when, at the foot of Scarphoot rock, I, a poor fisher-lad, dared to raise my eyes to such as thine? With thy own sweet lips thou bad'st me go, if I pleased, and win a position equal to thine, to offer thee, and then return and claim this little hand. I went forth, strong in thy sweet promise, to battle with fortune. Success has been mine; and, through the munificence of my king, I now come to lay the honors which he has so lavishly conferred upon me at thy feet. Wilt thou now redeem thy promise, and make Richard Graham the happiest man in the realm?”

“I told you then, dear Richard, that rank and

wealth were precarious and fleeting. All which once I claimed is gone, and I am a dependent upon the bounty of my noble and generous Lord of Sussex. Dost thou still claim a fulfillment of the promise I made, in more prosperous days?"

"Ask not such a question, treasure of my soul! The thought of seeing this hour has sustained me through numerous difficulties and trials, and given strength to this arm amid scenes of battle and blood."

"Take me, then, dear Richard, and never mayest thou regret the day thou hast conferred such great honor upon my hungry heart—hungry for thy love—eager for thy lightest consideration."

Again it is evening. In the Gothic chapel of King Henry, in the Abbey of Westminster, whose dim aisles were lighted up with perfumed tapers, while the deep tones of the organ went rolling through the lofty arches, mingling with the soft evening breeze that waved the banners of many noble dead, who slept beneath the stately marbles around, at the holy altar, kneel two couples. Before them stands the man of God, to unite Richard, Lord Essex, to Lucy Branden, and Bertrand, Lord Admiral, to Carrie, daughter of the Earl of Sussex. The king himself gives the brides away, and as each arose and clasped his wife to his beating heart, they again kneel at the feet of their king, blessing him in their inmost hearts for his munificent kindness. To him they owe every thing—place, position, brides, all!

"And to you I owe my life!" adds the king, brushing away a tear. "The debt can never be canceled, save in your happiness and prosperous lives."

THE END —

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